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The Refutation of the Self in Indian Buddhism

Candrakīrti on the selflessness of persons

James Duerlinger



THE REFUTATION OF THE SELF IN INDIAN BUDDHISM

Since the Buddha did not fully explain the theory of persons that underlies his teaching, in later centuries a number of different interpretations were developed. This book presents the interpretation by the celebrated Indian Buddhist philosopher, Candrakīrti (*c*.570–650 CE).

Candrakīrti's fullest statement of the theory is included in his *Autocommentary on the Introduction to the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*), which is, along with his *Introduction to the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakāvatāra*), among the central treatises that present the Prāsaṅgika account of the Madhyamaka (Middle Way) philosophy. In this book, Candrakīrti's most complete statement of his theory of persons is translated and provided with an introduction and commentary that present a careful philosophical analysis of Candrakīrti's account of the selflessness of persons. This analysis is both philologically precise and analytically sophisticated. The book is of interest to scholars of Buddhism generally and especially to scholars of Indian Buddhist philosophy.

James Duerlinger teaches in the Philosophy Department at the University of Iowa, USA. His research interests include the philosophy of religion, ancient Greek philosophy, and Indian Buddhist philosophy.

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PREFACE

In the early 1980s I first became acquainted with Candrakīrti's account of the selflessness of persons by reading Artemus Engle's 1983 dissertation on the topic. He included in his dissertation an English translation of the Tibetan translation of Candrakīrti's lost Sanskrit commentary on verses 120–77 of chapter 6 of his *Introduction to the Middle Way*. I read this translation with some amazement and with little understanding of the meaning of many of the things Candrakīrti said. I decided to do what I could to understand it, which meant that I needed to read and study the Tibetan text itself. I soon realized that I also needed to learn to read Indian Buddhist texts in their original Sanskrit.

Since a few years earlier Engle had kindly helped me to read two Tibetan philosophical texts, Gön chok jig may wang po's *Precious Garland*, which armed me with the technical vocabulary of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, and the first book of Tsongkhapa's *Essence of True Eloquence*, which introduced me to Tsongkhapa's literary style, I thought that I might be able on my own to translate Candrakīrti's account of the selflessness of persons. But I soon discovered that the Tibetan translation of Candrakīrti's account proved to be too difficult for me to translate by myself at the level of understanding of Tibetan I possessed at the time. Nevertheless, I resolved that at some point in my academic career I would find the time to study the Tibetan translation and translate it for use in the Indian Buddhist philosophy course I taught at the University of Iowa. Since in this course and in my Indian Philosophy course I had my students focus their study on Indian philosophical explanations of why we suffer in cyclic existence and how we can free ourselves from this suffering, I wanted to make Candrakīrti's explanation a part of their study.

So I began studying Sanskrit, first with Sheldon Pollack, who at the time was teaching at the University of Iowa, and then for a few years after he left I studied Buddhist Sanskrit texts with a visiting scholar who filled the position while the search was being made for Pollack's successor. I had read with Pollock the Sanskrit text of the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Clear Words* commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way*, and with the visiting scholar selections from texts of other Indian Buddhist philosophical schools.

In the first few years that I taught the course in Indian Buddhist philosophy at the University of Iowa I had my students read Theodore Stcherbatsky's 1919 translation of Vasubandhu's "Refutation of the Theory of a Self," which he translated from Tibetan with the help of Yaśomitra's Sanskrit commentary. Because I wanted my students to read a translation that reflected my own understanding of Vasubandhu's theses and arguments in the "Refutation," I set out to translate the Sanskrit text that had been discovered in the 1930s. A few years earlier, while studying Plato's *Sophist* on a sabbatical leave from the University of Iowa, I also took the time to read with Leonard Zwilling the Tibetan translation of Vasubandhu's "Refutation."

During this period, I was able, with the help of a grant from the University of Iowa, to obtain for two years the assistance of a research assistant, Michael Olsen, who knew not only enough Sanskrit to help with the translation of Vasubandhu's text, but also enough classical Chinese to enable me to consult, when I needed to do so, its two Chinese translations and their Chinese commentaries. Together we worked on the translation for two years, he consulting the Chinese and I consulting the Tibetan translation, slowly and carefully building an understanding of the meaning of what Vasubandhu had written in the "Refutation." When the translation was completed I used it in my Buddhist philosophy and Indian philosophy courses. In preparing lectures on the translation I made notes on the translation that I thought might be important enough to publish, along with the translation itself with an introduction. I had already published an early version of the translation in a 1987 volume of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, and while on a short-term Senior Scholar Fulbright Fellowship to India in 1993 I reread the Sanskrit text with Dr. N.H. Samtani in Sarnath.

In the meantime, I was working on two other books I intended for use as texts in my courses. The first was a translation of Plato's *Sophist* with a commentary to include in a series of books I was editing, and the second is this book on Candrakīrti's theory of persons. The book on Vasubandhu's "Refutation" was published by RoutledgeCurzon Press in 2003 as *Indian Buddhist Theories of Persons: Vasubandhu's "Refutation of the Theory of a Self"* and the book in which Plato's *Sophist* was translated and commented upon was published by Peter Lang Publishing in 2005 as a part of the series, "New Perspectives on Philosophical Scholarship."

After completing the book on Plato's *Sophist*, I was able to devote more time to the project of translating Candrakīrti's account of the selflessness of persons. When on a semester sabbatical leave from the University of Iowa in 2004, I went to the Tibetan Library in Dharamsala and to the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath to consult with scholars there on the translation. When I returned home I spent part of my time for two years translating the Sanskrit in the relevant chapters of Candrakīrti's *Clear Words* commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way* for inclusion in the Candrakīrti book. I was helped during this period by Jennifer Melmon, a graduate student Sanskritist, who I was able to hire from funds left to me from the estate of Mr. Joshi

Iwai, who for many years had studied Indian Buddhist philosophy with me. With her expert help on Sanskrit, and my own use of the Tibetan translation of *Clear Words*, I was able to complete this work in the spring of 2006.

In the fall of 2006 I continued work on Candrakīrti's theory of persons with the help of a grant from the American Institute of Indian Studies. This enabled me, along with a supplemental grant from the University of Iowa, to return to Dharamsala and Sarnath to draft an introduction and commentary. Finally, while on a Fulbright fellowship to India in 2009, I completed them. I thank the University of Iowa, the American Institute of Indian Studies, and the Fulbright foundations for their sponsorship of this work.

When I was an undergraduate student in philosophy I was drawn to the ideas of the ancient Greek philosophers on the nature of things and how these ideas dictate what sort of life is meaningful and how it might be achieved. Philosophy without this character did not much interest me. It was not until I went to graduate school in philosophy that I learned the need to explain and assess the thought of the Greeks from a contemporary philosophical perspective. In the realization that this approach to Greek thought was the key to academic success, I adopted the approach and paid my dues, albeit with a sense of the loss of a more personal involvement with the teachings of the Greeks. By the time I had gained a tenured entrance into academia I had virtually lost my initial love of the practical implications of Greek metaphysics because of the nature of my purely impersonal involvement with it for the purpose of teaching courses for graduate students in philosophy and publishing in professional journals.

It was not until I had happened upon Buddhist teachings brought to this country by Lama Yeshe in the early 1970s that I was able to get back in touch with the love I had had for ancient Greek thought. Buddhist teachings rekindled in me the desire to study the history of philosophy for the purpose of gaining the wisdom that would enable me to live a life worth living and to teach this history for the purpose of encouraging students to achieve the wisdom needed for such a life. Now that the fire in my belly was relit, I rededicated myself to my original way of studying the history of philosophy, this time in conjunction with an uneven practice of Mahāyāna Buddhism. In the early years, with the help of wonderful Buddhist teachers like Geshe Lhundrup Sopa, I immersed myself in the study and practice of Mahāyāna Buddhism. With the help of others I studied not only Sanskrit and Tibetan, but also the secondary literature on Buddhism such as it was in the late 1970s and 1980s. Except for one relapse in which I wrote an essay about Indian Buddhist theories of persons from the perspective of contemporary Western theories of persons, I lost interest in relating Greek and Indian Buddhist philosophy to contemporary Western philosophical concerns.

In my published work on Indian Buddhist theories of persons I have for the most part attempted to help my readers understand the theories from within the framework of Indian Buddhism itself. I saw little need to explain Indian Buddhist theories of persons from the perspective of Western philosophical questions, since there are already a number of competent professional philosophers

engaged in this discussion. I also believe that Indian Buddhist theories of persons are worthy of study apart from their relevance to Western philosophical questions. Nor did I see a need to preserve in the West Tibetan Buddhist interpretations of the different schools of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, since there are those who do this much better than I could. I have instead tried to present a comprehensive account of Indian Buddhist theories of persons that explains, in a way that other Western scholars have not, what the theses are for which Indian Buddhist philosophers were arguing and what their arguments are for those theses and against the theses of others.

I am painfully aware that this book is flawed. Every time I reread it, I make changes. And I have made many changes over the years. But at some point, I realize, I need to stop reading and revising drafts of the book, and present it for publication as it is. Were I to reread the present version, I would surely find more mistakes and revise. So I beg forgiveness from my readers for not continuing to revise the book until I can reread it without making revisions. What faults remain are left for you, my readers, to detect, and if so inclined, to tell others about them.

I dedicate this book to my wife, who has so graciously tolerated my long absences when working on the book, to my children and grandchildren, and to the students who over the years have studied with me Candrakīrti's wonderful attempt to provide us with knowledge of our true nature and how to use that knowledge to deal with our suffering. I would like to thank Casey Allyn for compiling the index to this book.

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1

INTRODUCTION

Part I: On the translation and its study

The text and the character of its study

In the sixth or fifth century BCE[1] at Deer Park in Sarnath, India, Śakhyamuni Buddha introduced a profound teaching about our suffering, its cause, its cessation and the path to its cessation.[2] In India a number of Buddhist philosophical schools emerged in which it was assumed that his teaching was based on a theory of persons[3] they developed into a theory that includes an explanation of the ontological status of persons, a presentation of arguments for the theory and against rival theories, replies to objections to the theory, and an account of the relevance of the theory to the problem of suffering.[4] A "person" (*pudgala*, *gang zag*)[5] or "self" (*ātman*, *bdag*),[6] in the Indian Buddhist tradition is that to which we refer when we use the first-person singular pronoun to refer[7] and to which, by convention, we ascribe person-properties.[8] Person-properties include properties such as possessing a body and mind, being a perceiver of objects, a thinker of thoughts about the objects perceived, an agent of actions that experiences the results of its actions, and such like.[9] Persons or selves are we ourselves as the objects to which we refer by using the first-person singular pronoun, not some entity present in us such as a soul, whose existence is posited within scripture or in a non-Buddhist philosophical school to explain why we ascribe unity and identity over time to ourselves.[10]

Since the Buddha did not fully explain the theory of persons that underlies his teaching, in later centuries a number of different interpretations were developed in the schools. One of these interpretations is presented by the celebrated Indian Buddhist philosopher, Candrakīrti (*c*.570–650 CE),[11] in verses 120–65 of the sixth chapter of the *Introduction to the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakāvatāra*)[12] and in his commentary on these verses, which is included in his *Autocommentary on the Introduction to the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*).[13] Candrakīrti presents his interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons as the theory sketched by Nāgārjuna (*c*.150–250 CE) in the *Treatise on the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakaśāstra*),[14] which is the central treatise upon which the Madhyamaka

(Middle Way) School of Indian Buddhist philosophy was developed. In what follows, the *Introduction to the Middle Way* I call the *Introduction*, Candrakīrti's *Autocommentary* on the *Introduction* I call the *Commentary*, and Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way* I call the *Treatise*.

In the second chapter of this book, I translate Candrakīrti's commentary on verses 120–65 of the sixth chapter of the *Introduction*. In this first chapter I introduce the translation and in the third I add a detailed analytical commentary on the translation. Throughout, I refer to Candrakīrti's commentary on verses 120–65 as the Commentary and to the verses in it as the Verses. I refer to the Verses by citing the numbers the editors and translators have assigned to them.

Although a few scholars are in the process of editing a Sanskrit copy of the *Introduction* and its *Commentary*,[15] their editions may not be available for quite some time. But since there are Tibetan translations[16] available that most scholars of Buddhism believe to be reliable guides to the meaning of the original Sanskrit, the Tibetan translation is used for this study. The edition of the Tibetan text used for the translation is that of Louis de La Vallée Poussin.[17]

This book on Candrakīrti's interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons is similar in character to my 2003 book, entitled *Indian Buddhist Theories of Persons: Vasubandhu's "Refutation of the Theory of a Self."* In that book I translated and explained the interpretation of Vasubandhu (*c.*350−450) as it occurs in the treatise he calls "The Refutation of the Theory of a Self" (*Ātmavādapratiṣedha*).[18] Vasubandhu is generally regarded as one of the most important philosophers of the scholastic period of Buddhist thought in India. He appended the "Refutation" to his *Treasury of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmakośa*).[19] In the first eight chapters of the *Treasury* Vasubandhu explains the theses or tenets[20] of the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣika School (*Great Exposition* Follower School). In his own commentary on these verses, called the *Autocommentary on the Treasury of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*), Vasubandhu criticizes the theses of the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣika School primarily from the point of view of the original Sautrāntika (Ṣūtra Follower) School.[21] In the "Refutation" Vasubandhu presents and defends the interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons accepted within both the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣika School and the original Sautrāntika School. Their interpretation is accepted with variations[22] in most Indian Buddhist philosophical schools. His treatise is mainly concerned with (i) a presentation and critique of the very different interpretation of the Buddha's theory that is accepted within the Indian Buddhist philosophical schools called the Pudgalavāda Schools because of the unorthodox account of the "person" (*pudgala*) presented in them,[23] and (ii) detailed replies to objections to his theory presented by the Pudgalavādins and a non-Buddhist school of philosophers in India called the Vaiśeṣikas ("particularists").

In the book on Vasubandhu's "Refutation" I explained and assessed (i) the interpretations of the Buddha's theory of persons presented by Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins, (ii) Vasubandhu's arguments for his interpretation and against that of the Pudgalavādins, (iii) the Pudgalavādins' arguments for their

own interpretation and against the sort of interpretation presented by Vasubandhu, and (iv) the replies each gave to the objections presented by the other.[24] Although the interpretation of Candrakīrti was explained in relation to those of Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins, it was not explained in any detail as it is here. As in the first book, the interpretations of the Buddha's theory of persons presented by Vasubandhu, the Pudgalavādins, and Candrakīrti I call their own theories of persons, meaning by this that they accept as true the theory of persons they attribute to the Buddha.

An important Mādhyamika Buddhist critique of non-Buddhist Indian theories of persons and the Pudgalavādin theory is included in the verse treatise, *Compendium of the Way Things Are* (*Tattvasaṃgraha*), which is composed by Śāntarakṣita (*c.*eighth century CE) and explained by Kamalaśīla (*c.*740–795 CE) in his *Elucidation of the Compendium of the Way Things Are* (*Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*).[25] The *Compendium* and its commentary have been translated into English,[26] but a careful philosophical study of their contribution to Indian Buddhist theories of persons awaits a new translation of the critique of non-Buddhist Indian theories of persons and the Pudgalavādin theory they contain, along with an introduction and a commentary of the sort I have provided here for the theories presented by Vasubandhu and Candrakīrti.[27]

In my account of Candrakīrti's theory of persons and its relation to the theories of Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins I have repeated little of what I wrote in the earlier book. What is repeated is reworked in a way that clarifies and corrects what is written there and captures the nuances of Candrakīrti's own use of Indian Buddhist philosophical terms. Nor do I again introduce any Indian non-Buddhist philosophical schools.[28] Vasubandhu's account of the meanings of Buddhist philosophical terms is not again explained,[29] but the meanings of these terms as used by Candrakīrti are extensively explained, since their explanation is crucial to an understanding and appraisal of his theory of persons. My research into Candrakīrti's theory of persons has led me to revise my 2003 account of the most basic philosophical questions to which a study of Vasubandhu's "Refutation" gives rise. I have included the new account of these questions in the Appendix to the present book.

In the earlier book I attributed to Vasubandhu the sameness thesis, which is that a self is the same as the collection of aggregates (*skandha*-s, *phung po*) in dependence upon which it is conceived. The aggregates are the ever-changing momentary elements of our bodies and minds that the Buddha identifies as the phenomena in dependence upon which a self is conceived. In the Commentary Candrakīrti assumes that all proponents of the sameness thesis believe that the aggregates are substantially real in the sense that each exists by its own nature. What exists by its own nature is what exists independently or by itself. Candrakīrti interprets the sameness thesis in two different ways. In the first interpretation a self is an object of the first-person singular pronoun that does not possess person-properties, and the sameness thesis is the thesis that it is the same as a collection of substantially real aggregates. In the second interpretation a self

is an object of the first-person singular pronoun that is a possessor of person-properties and the sameness thesis is the thesis that it is the same as a collection of aggregates in the sense that the conception of a self refers to a collection of substantially real aggregates.

Let us call the self in the first interpretation of the sameness thesis "a self without person-properties," meaning by this an object of the first-person singular pronoun that does not possess person-properties. Let us call the self in the second interpretation "a person-property self," meaning by this the object of the first-person singular pronoun that possesses person-properties. In the earlier book I did not distinguish these two selves,[30] but in the present book I do. The distinction is not to my knowledge explicitly drawn by Candrakīrti or by his Madhyamaka (Middle Way) followers. The distinction is needed to explain why he represents his fellow Buddhists as asserting the thesis that a self exists by itself when they deny that a self exists by itself.

The task of explaining Candrakīrti's theses and arguments in the Commentary has been formidable. Although Western scholars have begun to discuss the details of his theory of persons,[31] I am not aware of a published explanation and assessment of the theses and arguments in the Commentary. We are fortunate, therefore, to have the help of the interpretations of the Tibetan Buddhist scholars.[32] Among the interpretations of Candrakīrti's theory of persons that I have consulted, the interpretation of the scholar-saint, Tsongkhapa (1357–1419 CE), proved to be the most helpful for this study.[33] His Tibetan critics have presented some intriguing objections to his interpretation of Candrakīrti's philosophy as a whole and Tsongkhapa's followers in turn have presented replies and added objections to the interpretations of the critics. But this dispute about the character of his philosophy is not discussed here. To discuss it in a way that does justice to all sides of the dispute is not possible without the addition of a rather bulky chapter to an already lengthy study.[34] My intention in this study is to present an account of Candrakīrti's theory of persons from an analytical perspective that I believe best explains it. Readers who wish to understand the different Tibetan interpretations of Candrakīrti's philosophy need to study the Tibetan debate about its exact nature.

Although my account of Candrakīrti's theory of persons is influenced by Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Candrakīrti's philosophy, it is significantly different in at least three ways: (i) I use a Western form of philosophical analysis and terminology not used by Tsongkhapa to unpack the meanings of the theses and structures of the arguments of Candrakīrti's theory of persons; (ii) I have differently interpreted a few important theses and arguments in the theory; and (iii) I have not assumed that the theses of Candrakīrti's theory are true or his arguments sound. I do not discuss the question of whether or not the theses he attributes to any of his opponents are actually held by them, since this discussion would involve a lengthy analysis of the theses they actually held and my concern is to unpack the logic of his arguments against the theses he attributes to them rather than to determine whether his opponents in fact held these theses.

The only question I discuss is whether or not Candrakīrti is likely to have thought that the sameness thesis he attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas is the thesis Vasubandhu advances in the "Refutation."

Even though I use Western philosophical terms in the introduction and commentary to explain Candrakīrti's theory of persons, I avoid the use of the technical terminology employed in Western theories of persons.[35] The terminology employed in contemporary Western theories of persons has been developed by philosophers to pose and solve problems with which I believe Candrakīrti himself is not concerned in the Commentary. I try to explain the meanings of his philosophical terms so that they reflect his use of them to pose and solve the problems with which he is concerned. My philosophical study of Candrakīrti's theory of persons is an explanation and assessment of its theses and arguments with the meanings they were intended to have.

Candrakīrti's philosophy is a Madhyamaka (Middle Way) interpretation of the Buddha's teachings on the "wisdom" (*prajñā*, *shes rab*) needed to follow the Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle) path to Buddhahood.[36] Although it includes a refutation of philosophies presented both by non-Buddhists and other Buddhists in India, it is more than this; his philosophy implies an analysis of language and conceptuality, but it is more than this too. Candrakīrti's philosophy is his attempt to clarify the wisdom that explains the intrinsic nature of reality and how to integrate knowledge of it into our lives. His theory of persons is the heart of this wisdom.

Candrakīrti's Buddhist opponents accept the theses that (i) a person-property self is a conventional reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*), which does not exist by its own nature in the sense that it does not exist by itself or independently; (ii) when this self is conceived, we become attached to its existence by its own nature, since it appears to exist by itself when conceived; (iii) our attachment to its existence by itself is the root cause of our suffering; (iv) the independent existence of this self is refuted by (a) analyzing it into the aggregates in dependence upon which it is conceived, (b) carefully examining each of these aggregates and their collection for the purpose of determining whether or not it is the conventionally real self, (c) not finding any of the aggregates or the collection of aggregates to be the conventionally real self, and (d) placing the mind on the absence of the conventionally real self in the aggregates until we burn into consciousness its absence of existence there; and (v) when the absence of the existence of the conventionally real self has been deeply burned into consciousness, suffering ends. In meditation, of course, the refutation of the independent existence of a person-property self is conducted from the first-person singular perspective.

In the Commentary Candrakīrti shows that it is not only the independent existence of a person-property self that the Buddha taught does not exist by itself. The primary self whose independent existence the Buddha taught does not exist by itself, according to Candrakīrti, is a self without person-properties.

Although in some contexts I will refer to both a person-property self and a self without person-properties simply as a self without distinguishing which self it is,

I will say or imply that I am doing so when I do it, unless it is obvious to which self I am referring. So for instance when I say that Candrakīrti believes that a self does not exist by itself I mean that he believes that neither a person-property self nor a self without person-properties exists by itself, since both are conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. But his opponents assume that even though a person-property self does not exist by itself, a self without person-properties does, since it is not, they believe, conceived in dependence upon the aggregates.

In my analysis Candrakīrti understands the difference between his theory of persons and the theories of his Indian Buddhist opponents to be that they attribute independent existence to a self without person-properties and he does not. He assumes that his Indian Buddhist opponents believe that when the Buddha claimed that he does not unqualifiedly deny the existence of a self, he implied that even though a person-property self does not exist by itself, a self without person-properties does exist by itself. The assumption is that if a self without person-properties does not exist, there would be nothing at all to which the conception of a person-property self refers. Candrakīrti also believes that the Hindu philosophers in India think that a self without person-properties exists by itself because it is said or implied in their scripture that there is a self that exists by itself and because they believe that unless there is a self that exists by itself it cannot be explained how unity and identity over time can be attributed to a person-property self.

Candrakīrti believes that neither a person-property self nor a self without person-properties exists by itself, since both are conceived in dependence upon the aggregates[37] and are neither other than nor the same as the aggregates. Even though a self without person-properties does not exist by itself, Candrakīrti believes, the Buddha did not unqualifiedly deny its existence, since it exists in dependence upon being an acquirer of the aggregates. The Buddha taught that this self does not exist unless the aggregates exist.[38] Unlike modern linguistic philosophers, who interpret the first-person singular pronoun as an indexical expression used to refer to the speaker or writer of the sentence in which it occurs, Candrakīrti interprets this pronoun as a word used to refer to an object of the first-person singular pronoun that acquires the aggregates.

Other translations

There are at the time I write this sentence eight published English translations of the whole or parts of the *Introduction* that include the Verses and at least three unpublished English translations of the Commentary. I would have preferred to use one of the translations of the Commentary for this study, but since the differences between their translations of Candrakīrti's technical terminology and mine proved to be too great, I have composed my own translation.

One of the unpublished English translations of the Commentary is included in Artemus Engle's 1983 doctoral dissertation at the University of Wisconsin.[39] I found a copy of his dissertation in the University of Wisconsin Library in

Madison. Another is a 1994 translation of the *Commentary* by George Curinoff (Gelong Thubten Tsultrim).[40] I found a copy of this translation in the Śāntarakṣita Library at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, India. It does not seem to have been intended for general distribution,

Engle's translation was an indispensable aid to my early attempts to translate the more obscure passages in Candrakīrti's Commentary. I am also indebted to him for having introduced me to the reading of Tibetan philosophical texts. Although several drafts of my translation had been completed when I came upon Curinoff's translation in February 2004, a study of it enabled me to discover a few subtleties I had not previously noticed, and this enabled me to improve the translation. I also discussed parts of my translation with Geshe Namgyal Damdul when I was at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in 2004 and 2006.

In 2009, after my translation was completed, I obtained from Tashi Tsering, Professor of Sakya Philosophy at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, an English translation he and Jürgen Stöter Tillmann had recently made of the *Commentary*. I thank him here for this kindness and for our discussion of Gorampa's interpretation of the Commentary. Since my own translation was completed, it was with some satisfaction that I found nothing in their translation that showed a need for me to change mine. While at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in 2009 I also met Peter Ebbington, who took the time to comment on an earlier version of a part of my introduction. I thank him here for that help and for having introduced me to Professor Tsering.

What is good about my translation I owe to my study of the translations of Engle and Churinoff and to a few comments by Geshe Damdul, and what errors may remain are most certainly my own. Although I have not had the opportunity to study the Commentary with any Tibetan or Western scholars, my account of Candrakīrti's theory of persons is much better due to my having read their books and articles.

A prose English translation of the Verses was included in a 1983 book in which the oral teachings of Geshe Rabten on ultimate reality were translated and edited by Stephan Batchelor.[41] In Batchelor's translation the sixth chapter of the *Introduction* is translated as prose, and parts of a Tibetan commentary he used for the translation are integrated into them, without the words of Candrakīrti being differentiated from those of the commentator, since the translation was not produced for an academic readership.

C.W. Huntington, Jr. with the help of Geshe Namgyal Wangchen, included an English translation of the Verses in a 1989 book[42] in which the *Introduction* is translated. Appended to the translation are endnotes in which some of Candrakīrti's commentaries on the Verses are translated. In his translation of the *Introduction* and in his account of its content Huntington shows what he believes to be the relevance of Candrakīrti's philosophy to the thought of the pragmatists, the deconstructionists, and Wittgenstein.[43] He does not offer an explanation of the Verses in any detail and no concerted attempt is made to capture their original sense or to subject Candrakīrti's theory of persons to close philosophical analysis.

Peter Fenner included an English translation of the Verses in a 1990 book[44] that includes a translation of the whole of the *Introduction*. In this book Tsongkhapa's outline of the argument of the Verses is also translated. Fenner explains what he believes to be the relationship in Candrakīrti's work between reason, spiritual insight or intuition, and "the fuller dimensions of religiosity." He also includes the transliterated Tibetan he has translated, and presents a summary of its verses. Because the specific focus of his discussion is not Candrakīrti's theory of persons, he does little more than paraphrase the content of the Verses.

An English translation of the Verses was included in a 1995 book[45] in which the whole of the *Introduction* is translated, along with a commentary on the translation, by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. The translation of the Verses, although sometimes not literal, seems to be faithful to its meaning as interpreted by Tsongkhapa in his own commentary on the *Introduction*.

An English translation of the Verses was included in a book,[46] published in 1997, in which the commentary of Rendawa Shönnu Lodrö (fifteenth century CE) is translated. The translators are Jürgen Stöter Tillmann and Tashi Tsering. Rendawa, who was a teacher of Tsongkhapa, was a famous exponent of the Sakya School of Tibetan Buddhist theory and practice.

The Padmakara Translation Group included an English translation of the Verses in a 2002 book[47] in which the commentary of Ju Mipham Namgyal Gyatso (nineteenth/early twentieth century CE) on the *Introduction* is also translated. Mipham's commentary reflects the viewpoint of the Nyingma School, which is the earliest of the four main schools of Buddhist theory and practice to have appeared in Tibet.

An English translation of the Verses was included in a 2005 book in which Mikyö Dorje's sixteenth-century CE commentary on the sixth chapter of the *Introduction* is translated. A Tibetan text in Tibetan script is printed on opposite pages to the corresponding English translation. The translators are Ari Goldfield, Jules Levinson, and Jim and Birgit Scott.[48] Mikyö Dorje was the eighth Karmapa of the Kagyü School of Tibetan Buddhism.

Finally, a translation of the Verses was included by Tyler Dewar in a 2008 book[49] in which the sixteenth-century CE commentary on the *Introduction* by Wangchuk Dorje is also translated. Wangchuk Dorje was the ninth Karmapa of the Kagyü School of Tibetan Buddhism.

These translations of the Verses are somewhat different from one another and none employ the terminology I have chosen to translate Candrakīrti's technical philosophical terms. So I offer here, to a considerable extent relying upon the help of all of the translations mentioned above, a translation of the Commentary that enables me to conduct my study of Candrakīrti's theory of persons. Had I not had access to these many different published and unpublished works, I most certainly would have mistranslated passages in the Commentary. But in dependence upon this previous scholarship I have produced what I believe to be an accurate and readable translation of the Tibetan translation of the Commentary.[50]

The translation

Tibetan translations of Buddhist Sanskrit philosophical texts, though carefully crafted, are necessarily interpretations of their meaning, and English translations of the Tibetan translations are necessarily interpretations of the Tibetan translations. When it is feasible I try to ensure that my translations of Candrakīrti's technical terms capture the meanings of their Sanskrit originals. This effort is facilitated by the facts that some of the Verses in the Commentary are quoted in Sanskrit in Candrakīrti's commentary on the *Treatise*, entitled *Clear Words* (*Prasannapadā*),[51] and that there are Tibetan translations of some of his extant Sanskrit works.

Candrakīrti's Commentary is written in the traditional Indian Buddhist style of a debate between schools of Indian philosophy or unnamed scholars from these schools. The rationale of the style is to help students to sharpen their understanding of the theses in one's own school by refuting the theses of opposing schools and learning what objections have been brought against one's own theses and how to reply to them. I do not, as some translators do, translate this debate style of presentation as a dialogue between Indian schools of philosophy. Nor do I translate non-polemical questions introduced merely to elicit an explanation of a point, since this affectation need not be incorporated into a treatise in which opposing theses and arguments are presented. To improve the translation I changed some passive verbal constructions, which often occur in the text, to active constructions, and I sometimes break down long or complicated sentences into smaller ones when doing so does not affect the sense of the long sentences.

The mention of the first member of a known list of phenomena of a certain sort followed by *la sogs pa*, which means "etc." or "and so forth," is not usually literally translated when I believe that doing so does not change the arguments in which these phrases occur. For the sake of clarity and improved English translation in such cases the sort of things to which Candrakīrti is referring is rendered. For instance, *'phang lo la sogs pa*, which means "wheels, and so forth," which he uses to refer to the parts of a chariot, is translated as its "parts" when his argument is not changed by this translation. When such translations occur, a more literal translation, along with the Tibetan, is cited in notes so that readers may decide whether or not the arguments in which they occur have been mistranslated.

When I think that it may facilitate understanding, in sentences a word or phrase is added and placed in brackets in an effort to clarify the meanings of technical terms, to express parts of theses and arguments not explicitly expressed in the text itself, or to produce more elegant prose. The additions are most often made in reliance upon information supplied by the commentaries and other secondary sources. But at times something is supplied that is demanded by the context of argument or required by our current knowledge of Indian Buddhist philosophy. Readers who prefer to read a more literal translation may ignore the bracketed additions, since the translation is composed so that it can easily be

read without them. To make grammatical sense of sentences read without the bracketed word or phrase, readers need to reinterpret the punctuation, capitalization, or spelling required for the readability of the expanded translation. The text is translated in this way so that readers may determine for themselves whether or not the additions are appropriate. Although in a few cases, the same Tibetan term has been translated in different ways when it makes the meaning clearer, readers are informed about it either in Part III of this Introduction or in notes to the translation.

Not only in the translation, but also in this Introduction and the commentary, I have tried to avoid the use of unfamiliar and awkward expressions in English. But a number of transliterated Sanskrit terms are included that most readers will want to learn in order to help them read the secondary literature. English translations of Sanskrit or Tibetan texts are employed throughout, but I have cited the relevant Sanskrit or Tibetan title in parentheses after the first mention of its English translation.

Retained in the book are (i) technical Sanskrit names of followers of Indian schools of philosophical thought, such as "Vaibhāṣikas" (*Great Exposition* School Followers), "Pudgalavādins" (Theory-of-Person School Followers), "Sautrāntikas" (Sūtra School Followers), "Mādhyamikas" (Middle Way School Followers), and Sāṃkhyas (Enumeration School Followers); (ii) technical Sanskrit names of Buddhist practitioners, such as "Bodhisattvas" (Awakening Beings), "Śravakas" (Hearers), and "Pratyekabuddhas" (Solitary Awakeners); (iii) Sanskrit honorific titles given to a Buddha, such as "Tathāgata" (One Who is Thus Gone) and "Bhagavān" (Lord); and (iv) a number of Sanskrit terms with which readers who wish to continue the study of Indian Buddhist philosophy should become familiar, such as "svabhāva" (true intrinsic nature, false intrinsic nature, or conventional nature), "saṃsāra" (cyclic existence), "nirvāṇa" (liberation from cyclic existence), "parinirvāṇa" (final liberation from cyclic existence), "sūtra" (discourse of the Buddha), "śāstra" (treatise), "bodhicitta" (awakening mind), "Mahāyāna" (Great Vehicle), and "Tīrthikas" (Forders).[52]

The correct spelling of transliterated Sanskrit words is retained by including their diacritical marks. The plural forms of transliterated Sanskrit words, however, are formed as they would be in English, usually by adding "s" at the end of their singular form. I assume that my readers are able to read and pronounce the Sanskrit and Tibetan words I cite here. Readers without these abilities are referred to the grammars and dictionaries I include in the bibliography.

Candrakīrti's Verses are not given any sort of special poetic format, since the primary concern has been to get the meaning right. The Sanskrit verses, which contain two lines, are divisible into four parts, to which the letters "a," "b," "c," and "d" are assigned. The pair "ab" signifies the first of the two lines of verse, and "cd" signifies the second line. In my translation of the Tibetan these four parts of a verse are set out in four separate lines of verse, since this is the common practice. Although verses are not numbered or lettered in Sanskrit or Tibetan, the numbers and letters assigned to them by Western scholars are used

to indicate which lines of verse are translated or discussed. Whenever possible the four lines of verse in the Tibetan are usually kept in the order in which they are presented in the Tibetan, but sometimes it is necessary to deviate from this practice because of semantic constraints or the lack of space on the page for a proper translation of a single line. In this introduction to the translation and in the commentary on the translation, reference to whole verses is made by citing their numbers. Reference to the parts of a verse is made by citing the number of the verse along with the letters assigned to their parts. Reference to Candrakīrti's commentary on a verse is made by placing "C" before the number assigned to the verse. For instance, a reference to his Commentary on 120 is made by using "C120."

The sources of passages quoted by Candrakīrti in the Commentary, if known, are indicated in brackets. In the brackets the name of the texts from which the passages are taken is followed by a chapter number, after which, separated by a period, is either the number scholars have assigned to a verse quoted or a standard numbering of a scriptural passage, if one exists. If readers wish to seek more information about the sources of quotations in the text than supplied here and about philological matters, they may consult the extensive notes Louis de La Vallée Poussin added to his French translation of the *Commentary*. No attempt has been made to reproduce or revise his work on such matters here. The notes to the translation indicate the Tibetan words or phrases that are being translated, along with their known Sanskrit equivalents, provide literal translations of expressions that are not translated literally, and clarify the meanings of theses and arguments in the text.

Tibetan commentaries

There are seven Tibetan Buddhist commentaries on the Verses I have consulted for this study. All are composed from the Madhyamaka perspective, though they contain different interpretations based on the different reconstructions of Candrakīrti's philosophy presented in the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism. English translations of six of these commentaries have been published: (i) the commentary of Rendawa (1349–1412 CE),[53] (ii) the commentary of Gorampa (1429–1489 CE),[54] (iii) that part of the commentary of Mikyö Dorje (1507–1554 CE) that directly explains the verses of the sixth chapter of the *Introduction*,[55] (iv) the commentary of Wangchuk Dorje (1556–1603 CE), which contains a summary of portions of the commentary of Mikyö Dorje that were omitted from its published English translation, (v) the commentary of Mipham (1846–1912 CE),[56] and (vi) the commentary of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso (1931–present),[57] which is based on (vii) the commentary by Tsongkhapa (1357–1419 CE), who is the seventh commentator that I have consulted with the help of an unpublished translation of the sixth chapter of Tsongkhapa's commentary.[58]

Rendawa and Gorampa present the interpretation of the Sakya School of Tibetan Buddhism, Mikyö Dorje and Wangchok Dorje, the interpretation of the

Kagyü School, Mipham, the interpretation of the Nyingma School, and Geshe Gyatso, the interpretation he says is accepted in the new Kadam School of Tibetan Buddhism, which closely follows the interpretation of Tsongkhapa, which is also the basis of the interpretation of the Gelug School. Although there is at present no published English translation of Tsongkhapa's commentary, I am aware of six projects in which all or some part of his commentary on the *Introduction* is being translated. So by the time this study of Candrakīrti's theory of persons is published, there may be an English translation of Tsongkhapa's commentary available in print.

There are many other Sakyapa, Kagyüpa, Nyingmapa, and Gelugpa commentaries on the *Introduction* that have not been consulted for this study. The commentaries consulted have been chosen both because all but the commentary of Tsongkhapa are currently available in English translation[59] and because they incorporate the interpretations accepted in the four major Tibetan Buddhist schools.[60] If I had not studied these commentaries, my own commentary would have most certainly often gone astray. In what follows, the above-mentioned commentaries are called "the commentaries" and their authors are called "the commentators."

There are currently six books published in English that include either Tsongkhapa's discussions of Candrakīrti's theory of persons or detailed accounts of his discussions. The first of these books is a translation of Tsongkhapa's *Essence of True Eloquence* (*legs bshad snying po*),[61] which is included in Robert Thurman's encyclopedic *The Speech of Gold: Reason and Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism*.[62] The second is the third volume of a three-volume set, entitled *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, which is an excellent translation of Tsongkhapa's masterpiece by that name (*byang chub lam rim chen mo*). The volumes have been translated by a number of translators and are edited by Joshua W.C. Cutler and Guy Newland.[63] The third book is a translation of Tsongkhapa's commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*, entitled *Ocean of Reasoning* (*rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*).[64] The translation was done by Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield.[65] The fourth is *A Dose of Emptiness*, a treatise composed by a close disciple of Tsongkhapa. It has been translated by Jose Cabezon.[66] The fifth book is entitled *Maps of the Profound*.[67] In this book, Jeffrey Hopkins includes a translation of a treatise composed by another close disciple of Tsongkhapa. The sixth book is Geshe Thupten Jinpa's *Self, Reality and Reason*,[68] which is a detailed account of Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Candrakīrti's theory of persons. If I have omitted books or articles in which Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Candrakīrti's theory of persons are discussed, I apologize here for this oversight.[69]

Since my concern in this study is to explain Candrakīrti's theory of persons, I do not include a study of the seven Tibetan commentaries on the Verses I have consulted. But I do believe that there is a need for a separate study of their commentaries, along with a study of a few others that are important, especially the early commentary of Jayānanda (*fl.* 1075 CE), the one surviving commentary (in Tibetan) composed by an Indian Buddhist scholar.

As it is presented in the Verses, Candrakīrti's refutation of the independent existence of a self is complex and assumes a knowledge of Nāgārjuna's philosophy that some of my readers will not possess. Such readers need a commentary of some sort in order to help them to understand it properly. The most important commentary needed is Candrakīrti's own Commentary, and it is translated here. Since his Commentary is tersely worded and subject to different interpretations, many Tibetan Buddhist commentaries, based on Candrakīrti's Commentary, have been written on Candrakīrti's Verses.

The commentators invariably and correctly tell us that in the Verses Candrakīrti presents an argument for the theses that a self does not independently exist, and that this fact does not undermine our conventional ways of talking and thinking about a self. So it might seem that a study of their commentaries would be sufficient to gain an understanding of the Commentary, and that there is no need for the sort of commentary presented here. But there is an important difference between their commentaries and mine, since I employ a familiar form of Western philosophical analysis that I believe is more easily understood by Western readers and will enable them to assess for themselves the theses and arguments of Candrakīrti's theory of persons. But a study of my translation and commentary is not a substitute for a study of the Tibetan commentaries. I hope it is a bridge to their study, since I explain matters that should help readers to gain enough understanding of the Commentary to enable them to begin a study of the Tibetan commentaries and to arrive at their own interpretations.

Although Candrakīrti presents and rejects a thesis about persons he claims to have been put forward in an Indian Buddhist philosophical school he calls the Sāṃmitīya, the Tibetan commentators do not say very much about Candrakīrti's attribution of the thesis to this school, and they do not exactly agree with one another in what they say.[70] Because Candrakīrti does not explain the attribution, a special problem is created for Western scholars of the history of Indian Buddhist philosophy, who assume it to be one of their tasks to determine which theses are asserted within the different schools of Indian Buddhist philosophy. Because of the brevity of the commentators' comments and their disagreements, they do not help us much to identify exactly who these Sāṃmitīyas are or how exactly they fit into the different classifications of Indian Buddhist schools presented by Indian and Tibetan Buddhist scholars.[71] This problem will not be discussed in this study, since my concern with the Sāṃmitīyas is about the theses attributed to them and whether the theory of persons Candrakīrti attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas is the same as the theory of Vasubandhu, not about who exactly these Sāṃmitīyas are.

One thesis Candrakīrti attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas is the thesis that the aggregates are a self. This is the sameness thesis held by Vasubandhu in the "Refutation." The aggregates are the ever-changing momentary elements of our bodies and minds that the Buddha identifies as the phenomena in dependence upon which a self is conceived. The Buddha presented a fivefold classification of the aggregates that is enumerated by Candrakīrti in C126.[72] Candrakīrti also

attributes to some Sāṃmitīyas the thesis that "mind" (*citta*, *sems*) is a self. The term translated as "mind" in "mind is a self" is the aggregate usually called "consciousness" (*vijñāna*, *rnam par shes pa*).

The sameness thesis in its aggregates formulation is assumed by Candrakīrti to mean either that a self without person-properties is the same as a collection of aggregates or that reference to a person-property self is a reference to a collection of aggregates. In the commentary I will explain how some of Candrakīrti's objections to the sameness thesis are based on one of these assumptions and how others are based on the other. I believe that Candrakīrti assumes the sameness thesis to have two forms so that he might make sure that his objections pertain to both forms of the sameness thesis.

Candrakīrti believes that both a person-property self and a self without person-properties are conceived in dependence upon the aggregates, though in different ways. Unlike his Indian Buddhist opponents, he interprets a self without person-properties as an object of the first-person singular that is the acquirer of the aggregates. He assumes that a person-property self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates because it possesses person-properties, and that a self without person-properties is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates because it is what acquires aggregates. Candrakīrti seems to believe that a self that acquires aggregates does not, as an acquirer of aggregates, possess aggregates, since it possesses aggregates in dependence upon acquiring them.

Being an acquirer of aggregates is not a person-property, since person-properties are conceived in dependence upon the aggregates and an acquirer of the aggregates does not as such possess them. The commentators do not make this distinction between an aggregates-acquiring self, which does not possess person-properties, and an aggregates-possessing self, which possesses person-properties. But the distinction enables us to understand why, in spite of his opponents' claim that a self does not exist by itself, he attributes to them the thesis that a self exists by itself.

Although Candrakīrti attributes the sameness thesis to the Sāṃmitīyas, the Sāṃmitīyas are among those usually thought to have asserted "the inexplicability thesis." The inexplicability thesis is that a self exists by itself and is neither other than nor the same as any of the substantially real aggregates or as any collection of the substantially real aggregates. In C146 Candrakīrti does attribute to the Sāṃmitīyas the inexplicability thesis, though he now calls them the "Āryasāṃmitīyas," which means "the noble Sāṃmitīyas." The Tibetan commentators agree that Candrakīrti thinks that there are at least two different schools of Sāṃmitīyas. One of these schools asserts the sameness thesis and the other, which is often called the Vātsīputrīyas (Followers of the School of Vātsīputra), asserts the inexplicability thesis. Since the schools in which the inexplicability thesis is asserted are often called the Pudgalavāda Schools, to avoid confusion I will refer to those whom Candrakīrti calls the Āryasāṃmitīyas as the Pudgalavādins.

Candrakīrti attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas the thesis that the aggregates are a self, meaning by this that a collection of substantially real aggregates is a self.

Some of his objections to the thesis are based on the assumption that although the Sāṃmitīyas do not claim that the sameness thesis is true because each of the aggregates is a self, they are in fact committed to the claim. He thinks that the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to this claim because they assert or assume the truth of the theses that (i) a self without person-properties exists by itself, (ii) reference to something is reference to what exists by itself, (iii) a collection of aggregates as a collection does not exist by itself, and (iv) the aggregates in the collection exist by themselves.[73] Candrakīrti seems to think that the Sāṃmitīyas did not consider the implications of asserting all four of these theses. Had they considered the implications, they would have realized that they committed themselves to the view that a collection of aggregates is a self because each of the aggregates is a self.[74]

According to Gorampa, the Sāṃmitīyas assert that the aggregates or minds are a self,[75] but the orthodox Vaibhāṣikas and original Sautrāntikas do not, since they assert that a self is "real by way of a conception" (*btags yod*, *prajñapti-sat*).[76] If Gorampa is right about this, then in none of the Buddhist schools in which it is asserted that a self is real by way of a conception is the sameness thesis accepted. But if in none of the Buddhist schools in which it is asserted that a self is real by way of a conception is the sameness thesis asserted, Candrakīrti does not in the Commentary pose objections to the theory of persons held in the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣika and original Sautrāntika Schools.

Geshe Gyatso thinks, as Tsongkhapa does,[77] that Vasubandhu and those in other Indian Buddhist schools who assert that a self is real by way of a conception do assert that the aggregates are a self or that mind is a self. He says, for instance, that when those in "the lower Buddhist schools" search for the object of the conception of a self among the aggregates, some find that a collection of aggregates is a self, others find that each of the aggregates is a self, and others that mind is a self.[78]

On this issue I think that Geshe Gyatso and Tsongkhapa are right to the extent that in the earlier schools it was claimed that a collection of aggregates is a self, but wrong that in them it was claimed that each of the aggregates is a self. Gorampa does not realize that the self said in Indian Buddhist Schools to be real by way of a conception is a person-property self rather than a self without person-properties. It is a self without person-properties that is said in these schools to be the same as aggregates or minds. The philosophers in these schools think that a person-property self is real by way of a conception and that it does not exist by itself. They also think that a self without person-properties exists by itself because analysis shows that it does. According to Candrakīrti, his Buddhist opponents accept these theses because the theses explain why the Buddha denied the existence of a self and affirmed that he does not unqualifiedly deny its existence. The explanation is that he was talking about two different selves.[79]

Tibetan scholars are reported not to agree about whether the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis is the thesis that each of the aggregates is a self or the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self.[80] Candrakīrti seems to believe that they assert

the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self without realizing that they are committed to the thesis that each of the aggregates in the collection is a self. I doubt that any Buddhist School would have meant to assert that each of the aggregates is a self, since each of the aggregates being a self is obviously absurd and the Buddha explicitly denies in scripture that each of the aggregates is a self. Moreover, in C126, where Candrakīrti explains the Sāṃmitīyas' scriptural support for the sameness thesis, he says that the support given is for the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self.

A helpful feature of the work of the commentators is that they themselves or their disciples supply outlines of Candrakīrti's argument that reflect the interpretation of the schools to which they belong. These outlines are intended for use by practitioners in order to help them navigate the twists and turns of Candrakīrti's argument. This is a very helpful device that will be employed here, though without the detailed doctrinal elaborations it is given by the commentators and without using the outlines, as many commentators do, as headings of the different parts of Candrakīrti's argument. I avoid such headings because I want to discourage readers from substituting a study of the outlines for a study of what Candrakīrti actually says.[81]

Part II: On the *Commentary*

Mahāyāna Buddhism and the Commentary

According to the Mahāyānists (those who accept the Mahāyāna sūtras as the teachings of the Buddha), in *The Unraveling the Thought Sūtra* (*Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra*)[82] the Buddha revealed that there are three turnings of the wheel of his doctrine, each turned for the sake of practitioners with different intellectual propensities.[83] At Deer Park in Sarnath, where the Buddha taught the doctrine of the four realities, he taught that if something exists, it "exists by its own character" (*svalakṣaṇasiddha*, *rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa*), and explained the functions of the things that he said exist in this way to help his disciples free themselves from the reification of things that exist only by convention. This is the first turning of the wheel of the doctrine. It is presented in the discourses of the Buddha in which he taught a path to one's own freedom from saṃsāra. This explanation was later carefully explained in the voluminous *The Great Exposition* (*Mahāvibhāṣā*), which was composed by the Buddhist masters in the Kaśmīri Vaibhāṣika School. This lengthy explanation was condensed by Vasubandhu in *The Treasury of Knowledge* and subjected by him, in his *Autocommentary on the Treasury of Knowledge*, to criticism primarily from the vantage point of the original Sautrāntikas, whose theses are claimed to be based on what was taught by the Buddha in the sūtras. These two schools we may call the "Abhidharma schools," meaning by this the schools whose theses are set out in the *Abhidharmakośa* and in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. The Indian Buddhist school philosophers who accepted these theses may be called the "Abhidharmikas."

On Vulture Peak the Buddha turned the second wheel of doctrine. He turned the second wheel of doctrine for those who were able, because of merit gained, to understand and accept the teaching that what exists does not exist by its own character or nature. Those who accept this turning of the wheel are called the Mādhyamikas (Middle Way School Followers). His Madhyamaka teachings are said to be preserved in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* (*Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*-s).[84]

In *The Unraveling the Thought Sūtra* it is said that the Buddha taught at Vaiśālī and other places the doctrine that some things exist by their own character or nature and others do not. It is said there that this is taught for those who were confused by the Buddha's presentation of the first two turnings of the wheel of doctrine, yet disposed to accept elements of each. Those who accepted this third turning of the wheel of doctrine are called the Cittamātrins (Mind Only School Followers), since the teaching included the thesis that mind exists by its own character and that its objects do not. Although in *The Unraveling the Thought Sūtra* the Buddha says that this third doctrine is his final teaching, Candrakīrti believes that the Buddha's final teaching is the Madhyamaka philosophy, since the Buddha turned the third wheel of the doctrine for the sake of those who were not able to accept the teaching that nothing exists by its own character or nature.

The Abhidharmikas say that the Buddha taught only a path to one's own freedom from suffering in saṃsāra. The Mādhyamikas and Cittamātrins say that the Buddha also taught a path to the freedom of all sentient beings from suffering in saṃsāra. The Abhidharmikas deny that the sūtras the Mādhyamikas and Cittamātrins claim to have been taught by the Buddha were actually taught by him, and to this day the disagreement persists between the Theravādins (the Followers of the Elders), who live primarily in South Asia, and the Mādhyamikas, who live primarily in North Asia. Because the Mādhyamikas and Cittamātrins follow the path to the freedom of all beings from suffering in saṃsāra the "Mahāyāna" (Great Vehicle), they are called "Mahāyānists" and the sūtras they believe to explain the path to freedom from suffering for all sentient beings in saṃsāra are called the Mahāyāna sūtras.

The *Sūttra Unraveling the Thought* is a Mahāyāna sūtra accepted as a genuine teaching of the Buddha by both the Mādhyamikas and the Cittamātrins. Because in some Mahāyāna sūtras the Buddha taught the Madhyamaka philosophy and in others the Cittamātra philosophy, Mahāyānists distinguish sūtras that require interpretation from sūtras that present the Buddha's final teaching. Since in the *Sūttra Unraveling the Thought* the Buddha taught that the Cittamātra doctrine is his definitive teaching, the Mādhyamikas claim that it is a sūtra that requires interpretation because it was taught to Mahāyānists unable to accept as his final teaching the Madhyamaka doctrine. Candrakīrti is a Mādhyamika who accepts as genuine sūtras in which the Buddha's definitive teaching is presented not only in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*, but also in the *Sūtra on the Ten Stages* (*Daśabhūmikasūtra*),[85] which is the sūtra upon which Candrakīrti relies in the *Introduction* to explain the ten stages of the path to Buddhahood.

Those who follow the Mahāyāna path are called "Bodhisattvas" (Awakening Beings). Bodhisattvas are those who seek to become "Buddhas" (Awakened Beings) out of "great compassion" (*mahākarūṇa*, *snying rje chen po*) for all beings who suffer in saṃsāra. Buddhas possess the ten "perfections" (*paramitā*, *phar phyin*)[86] that enable them after their final rebirth as ordinary beings to spontaneously and effortlessly help all sentient beings free themselves from saṃsāra. According to Candrakīrti the Śravakas (Hearers) and Pratyekabuddhas (Solitary Awakeners)[87] have the same realizations that enable Bodhisattvas to achieve their own personal awakening, but they do not become Buddhas, since they seek their own awakening and do not practice the ten perfections with bodhicitta.

The basic cause of our suffering in saṃsāra, the Buddha taught, is *ahaṃkāra* (*bdag 'dzin*), which is translated here as "the conception of a self" or as "conceiving a self," depending upon context. According to Tsongkhapa, Candrakīrti believes that when, in dependence upon a collection of aggregates, we conceive ourselves as a self, (i) our conceptual minds create a conceptual image of ourselves as a self, (ii) the conceptual image of this self appears to our conceptual minds to exist by its own nature, (iii) the conceptual image of this self also appears to our minds to be the self, (iv) our conceptual minds are unable to distinguish the conceptual image of a self from the self of which it is an image, and consequently, (v) our conceptual minds conceive ourselves to be a self that exists by its own nature. Although the conception of a self as existing by its own nature is mistaken, I refer to it as "the conception of a self" rather than as "the misconception of a self," since it is our everyday conception of a self. Because I believe that Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Candrakīrti's conception of a self best explains his usage of *ahaṃkāra* (*bdag 'dzin*), I assume its correctness in what follows.

Candrakīrti thinks that since the conception of a self is the cause of our suffering in saṃsāra, it is to be abandoned. The conception of a self to be abandoned he believes to be the conception of a self without person-properties. Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins believe that the conception of a self to be abandoned is the conception of a person-property self.[88] Candrakīrti assumes that we reify the person-property self in dependence upon reifying the self without person-properties, since this self is the self that acquires person-properties.

According to Candrakīrti, in dependence upon a self being conceived, its possessions are conceived.[89] Conceiving a self and conceiving its possessions are together called "the transient collection view" (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*, *'jig tshogs la lta ba*). In dependence upon the transient collection view the mental afflictions arise that contaminate actions (*karma*-s, *las*) and these contaminated actions give rise to different forms of suffering in saṃsāra in accord with the law of actions and their results.

The law of actions and their results may be characterized for our purposes as the law that contaminated actions produce rebirth in saṃsāra and its faults. Its faults include the suffering of being born, being sick or injured, being separated from loved ones, being confronted by enemies, dying, and so on. When contami-

nated actions are motivated by the desire to harm others, they produce results in saṃsāra that are seen as worldly suffering for the agent that performs them. When motivated by the desire to benefit others, contaminated actions produce results in saṃsāra that are seen as worldly happiness for the agent that performs them, even though they produce results that are, from a deeper perspective, forms of suffering.[90] The different sorts of results produced by harmful and beneficial actions are determined not only by what motivates the actions, but also by such factors as the specific kind of harmful or beneficial actions performed, the character of the objects acted upon, the manner in which the contaminated actions are performed, and so on.

Different accounts are presented by Mahāyāna teachers of what is accomplished on the first two of the five Mahāyāna paths. Here I present just one version of such an account. In general, on the Mahāyāna path (i) practitioners develop a deep understanding of the Buddha's teachings on suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the path to its cessation, and on this basis, renounce continued life in saṃsāra; (ii) they practice "moral discipline" (*śīla*, *tshul khrims*), "concentration" (*samādhi*, *ting nge 'dzin*) and "wisdom" (*prajñā*, *shes rab*); (iii) they develop "bodhicitta" (awakening mind), which is the desire to achieve Buddhahood for the sake of helping all suffering sentient beings to free themselves from saṃsāra; (iv) they learn to perform actions motivated by this desire; and (v) they study and practice as best they can the ten perfections with bodhicitta motivation.

When bodhicitta becomes a spontaneous motivation for actions of body, speech, and mind, "the path of accumulation" (*saṃbhāramārga*, *tshogs lam*) is said by some[91] to be entered. On the path of accumulation fledgling Bodhisattvas accumulate the merit needed to advance quickly on the remaining paths. To increase their wisdom (i) they acquire an intimate knowledge of the phenomena into which, on the first turning of the wheel of doctrine, the Buddha analyzed phenomena for the purposes of meditation; (ii) they practice mindfulness of the impermanent, suffering, empty and selfless character of the body, feelings, thoughts and other internal phenomena; and (iii) they learn in meditation (a) to identify the false appearance of a self existing by its own nature, (b) to look for this self among the phenomena in dependence upon which it is conceived, and upon failing to find it (c) to realize that a self does not exist by its own nature. On the path of accumulation the *Commentary* itself might also be studied with the help of a qualified teacher from the Madhyamaka School.

The second Mahāyāna path is called the "path of preparation" (*prayogamārga*, *sbyor lam*) because it is the path on which practitioners prepare themselves to have an insight into the absence of a self in the causal basis of its conception. On this path perfect concentration is developed and combined with wisdom for the sake of producing "special insight" (*vipaśyanā*, *lhag mthong*), which is perfected concentration on the absence of a self in the causal basis of its conception. Candrakīrti believes that only when bodhicitta is joined with this special insight are practitioners Bodhisattvas.[92]

When practitioners in meditation gain an insight into the absence of an independently existing self, the third Mahāyāna path is traversed. It is called the "path of insight" (*darśanamārga*, *mthong lam*). The path of insight is completed in a single meditative session. At this time Bodhisattvas have a profound realization that nothing exists by its own nature. Although they now abandon their intellectually formed obstructions to full awakening, they have not yet abandoned their inborn obstructions to full awakening, which include the mental afflictions that arise because of contaminated actions performed in the past and the dispositions that cause them to arise.

The inborn obstructions to full awakening are gradually abandoned on the "path of meditation" (*bhāvanāmārga*, *sgom lam*). On this path Bodhisattvas become increasingly familiar with the insight into the absence of independently existing phenomena. At the eighth stage of the path of meditation they attain liberation from their own suffering in saṃsāra, but they still retain the imprints placed in their minds, for instance, by beginningless past conceivings of a self.[93] These imprints are obstructions to the omniscience Buddhas obtain after their last rebirth as Bodhisattvas. This is the omniscience Buddhas employ to help all sentient beings to abandon saṃsāra. At the eighth stage Bodhisattvas begin the process of abandoning the obstructions to omniscience.

Only when Buddhahood is attained is the "path of no more training" (*aśaikṣamārga*, *mi slob lam*) reached. On this path all of the powers of Buddhas to help all sentient beings become free from suffering are spontaneously and effortlessly and continuously being exercised. In the *Commentary* Candrakīrti explains the Mahāyāna path of meditation as it is described in the *Sūtra on the Ten Stages*. He also explains both the qualities of this path and the fruit of following the path. In chapter 6 of the *Commentary*, a part of which I translate here, Candrakīrti explains the sixth stage of the path of meditation.

Candrakīrti believes the doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, including those of saṃsāra and its sufferings, the law of actions and their results and omniscient Buddhas. He believes that an omniscient Buddha took on the appearance of human form in India in the sixth century BCE to teach those able only to free themselves from saṃsāra how to do so, and those able to become Buddhas how to do so.[94] I will not in this study discuss the basis upon which Candrakīrti adopts these beliefs.[95] I will explain the theses and arguments of his theory of persons as they are employed within the context of Candrakīrti's account of the Mahāyāna path of meditation.

***Madhyamaka Buddhism and the* Commentary**

In the *Commentary* Candrakīrti often quotes verses from the Mahāyāna sūtras and from the śāstras of Nāgārjuna and his followers. Most of his quotations from śāstras are from the *Treatise*, since the *Introduction* is an account of the ten stages in which they are explained from the perspective of the philosophy Nāgārjuna set out in the *Treatise*. Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka philosophy is an

interpretation of the philosophy the Buddha taught in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*. In the *Commentary* Candrakīrti draws upon Nāgārjuna's understanding of the perfection of wisdom to object to theses of the original Cittamātra philosophy as it was presented by Asaṅga and Vasubandhu in the fourth century CE.[96]

In the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* it is said that the ultimate reality of all things is their "emptiness" (*śūnyatā*, *stong pa nyid*), which is their absence of existing by their own nature. Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti sometimes say that the absence of existing by their own natures is the absence of their existence. In my translations of passages from their work I will follow their practice, but in this introduction and the commentary I will not, since what is said will be made clear.

Even though things do not exist by their own nature, Nāgārjuna says, they arise in dependence upon one another. For this reason he says that dependently arising things do not unqualifiedly not exist. Nāgārjuna composed the *Treatise* for the purpose of explaining properly the Buddha's teaching that all phenomena dependently arise so that all doubts, misunderstandings, and mistaken views about the Buddha's teaching on emptiness may be eliminated. Dependent arising is dependent existence by virtue of its contrast to independent existence. Since independent existence is unqualified existence, dependent arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*, *rten 'brel/rten 'byung*) possesses qualified existence.

Included in the notion of dependent existence are (i) existence that depends upon causes and conditions, (ii) existence that depends upon the possession of parts or aspects, and (iii) existence that depends upon being conceived in relation to something else. The first two of these sorts of dependent existence are recognized in all schools of Indian Buddhist philosophy. It is said in all that impermanent phenomena exist in dependence upon causes and conditions. According to Nāgārjuna, this implies that impermanent phenomena do not exist by their own nature, since phenomena that exist by their own nature do not exist in dependence upon causes and conditions. It is also said in all of the Indian Buddhist schools that wholes exist in dependence upon their parts, and in all it is agreed that this implies that wholes do not exist by their own nature. What distinguishes Nāgārjuna's understanding of dependent existence from those of his Buddhist predecessors is his belief that all things exist in dependence upon being conceived in relation to something else.

Since what conceives something in relation to something else is the mind, it is also implied that all things exist in dependence upon a mind conceiving it in relation to something else. However, Nāgārjuna does not believe, according to Candrakīrti, that mind exists in a more basic way than the objects it conceives, since mind exists in dependence upon causes and conditions, in dependence upon its possession of parts, and in dependence upon being conceived in relation to its objects. It is because mind dependently exists that it does not exist by its own nature. Things that exist by their own nature cannot exist in dependence upon causes and conditions, in dependence upon the possession of parts or properties, or in dependence upon being conceived in relation to something else.

The notion of dependent existence is introduced by Nāgārjuna, according to Candrakīrti, as the way in which the Buddha forges a "middle way" (*madhyama*, *dbu ma*) between the extremes of unqualified existence and unqualified non-existence. The absence of unqualified existence Candrakīrti calls "selflessness" (*nairātmya*, *bdag med*), which has two forms, "the selflessness of persons" (*pudgalanairātmya*, *gang zag gi bdag med*) and "the selflessness of phenomena" (*dharmanairātmya*, *chos kyi bdag med*). The selflessness of phenomena, according to Tsongkhapa, is the selflessness of all things other than persons.

In India the thesis that a self exists by itself takes one of four different forms, all of which Candrakīrti believes were refuted by Nāgārjuna in the *Treatise*. The first is the thesis that a person-property self exists by itself. The second form is the thesis that a self other than the aggregates exists by itself. This thesis Candrakīrti attributes to the Tīrthikas (Forders). The Tīrthikas are those who belong to the non-Buddhist philosophical schools Candrakīrti discusses in 121–5. The third is the thesis that a self exists by itself as a collection of aggregates or minds. This third thesis is asserted, with some modifications, in most Indian Buddhist philosophical schools. Candrakīrti discusses this thesis in 126–41. The fourth is the thesis that a self exists by itself that is neither other than nor the same as any of the aggregates or as any collection of aggregates. This thesis he attributes to the Āryasāṃmitīyas, whom I am calling the Pudgalavādins. In the Commentary Candrakīrti appeals to what Nāgārjuna says in the *Treatise* to support his refutations of these four forms of the thesis that a self exists by itself. Those who innately conceive a self as a self that exists by itself and those who believe that it exists by itself in one of the above four ways we may call "reificationists," since Candrakīrti thinks that they accept the existence by itself of a self that does not exist by itself.

Reasoning whose premises are accepted as true by opposing parties in a debate is called independent reasoning. Independent reasoning cannot be used by Nāgārjuna to refute the thesis of the reificationists, since he does not accept as true any thesis that asserts or presupposes that a self exists by itself. So Nāgārjuna attempts to convince reificationists that a self does not exist by itself by drawing unacceptable "consequences" (*prāsaṅga*-s, *thal 'gyur*) from their thesis that a self exists by itself. If his reificationist opponents are not Buddhists, the unacceptable consequences he draws from their thesis that a self exists by itself are consequences (i) that are inconsistent with the functionally established conventions of discourse and thought, which are the basis upon which he thinks a theory of persons is created, or (ii) that contradict other theses the opponents explicitly or implicitly hold to be true and are unwilling to abandon; but if his reificationist opponents are Buddhists, he also draws from their thesis that a self exists by itself consequences that contradict the Buddha's teachings of definitive meaning.[97]

Some years after he had completed the *Introduction* and *Commentary* Candrakīrti wrote *Clear Words*,[98] his commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*. In this commentary he sometimes refers his readers to the *Introduction.* For

instance, in his *Clear Words* commentary on the first half of *Treatise* 18[99] he quotes both 120–1 and 127–8. In this half of *Treatise* 18 the subject is the selflessness of persons.

In *Treatise* 9–10 Nāgārjuna rejects the thesis that a self exists by itself as a perceiver of objects. In *Treatise* 9 he argues that a perceiver of objects does not exist independently, since a perceiver and its perception are conceived in dependence upon one another. Since being a perceiver is a person-property, he is rejecting the view that a person-property self exists by itself. In *Treatise* 10 Nāgārjuna replies to the objection that, even if a perceiver and its perception are conceived in dependence upon one another, each nonetheless exists independently, since they are like fire and fuel, whose causal efficacy shows that they exist by themselves in spite of being conceived in dependence upon one another. His basic reply to this objection is to argue that fire and fuel do not exist by themselves. At the end of *Treatise* 10 Nāgārjuna says that the arguments used to show that fire does not exist by itself can be used to show that a self does not exist by itself.

Treatise 11–12, 18, and 22 contain Nāgārjuna's replies to objections to his thesis that a self does not exist by itself and *Treatise* 27 contains his objections to the thesis that an independently existing self exists in the past, present, and future. In *Treatise* 11 he replies to the objection that if a self does not exist by itself saṃsāra does not exist by itself since there would be nothing that is reborn in its different realms. His basic reply is to argue that saṃsāra does not independently exist. In *Treatise* 12 Nāgārjuna replies to the objection that if a self does not exist by itself, neither does suffering, since there will be nothing that suffers. His basic reply is to argue that suffering does not exist by itself. In *Treatise* 18 Nāgārjuna argues, as part of an extended argument for the thesis that no phenomena exist independently, that a self does not so exist. In *Treatise* 22 he considers the objection that the continuum of life must exist by itself because a Tathāgata exists by itself in his last life as a human being. Nāgārjuna's basic reply is to argue that in his last life as a human being, a Tathāgata does not exist independently. In *Treatise* 27 Nāgārjuna argues that if a self independently exists in the past, it does not give rise to a self that independently exists in the present and that if a self exists by itself in the present, it does not give rise to a self that exists by itself in the future. Candrakīrti quotes verses from *Treatise* 10, 18, 22, and 27 in the Commentary to show that he is presenting the teachings of Nāgārjuna.

In *Commentary* 6.9–119 Candrakīrti explains, defends, and extends an argument that Nāgārjuna presents in *Treatise* 1.1 to establish the selflessness of phenomena. Candrakīrti incorporates into his explanation of this argument his objections to the theses of the Cittamātra School. He interprets the Cittamātrins' central theses to be that minds exist by themselves as momentary phenomena and that the objects of these minds falsely appear to exist with a non-mental character.

Both in the *Commentary* and in the *Clear Words* Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland of Advice to the King* (*Rājaparikathāratnāvalī*)[100] is quoted. In both

Candrakīrti also quotes passages from *Verses on the Refutation of Objections* (*Vigrahavyāvartanīkārikā*),[101] in which Nāgārjuna replies to the objections posed by the Naiyāyika logicians[102] to his doctrine of emptiness. He also wrote commentaries on Nāgārjuna's *Seventy Verses on Emptiness* (*Śūnyatāsaptatikārikā*)[103] and *Sixty Verses on Reasoning* (*Yuktiṣaṣtikākārikā*).[104] Both commentaries have survived in Tibetan translation.[105] Candrakīrti wrote a commentary[106] on the *Four Hundred* (*Catuḥśataka*),[107] which is a śāstra of verses composed in the second century CE by Nāgārjuna's disciple, Āryadeva. In the *Four Hundred* Āryadeva develops Nāgārjuna's objections to the theses of other India philosophical schools and presents the teachings of Nāgārjuna as the wisdom component of the Mahāyāna path.

In *Clear Words* Candrakīrti often refers to Buddhapālita's sixth century CE commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*, entitled the *Commentary on the Foundations of the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakahṛdāyakārikā*).[108] Buddhapālita explains Nāgārjuna's arguments in the *Treatise* as arguments in which unacceptable consequences are drawn from theses held by his opponents. Another Madhyamaka philosopher to whose work Candrakīrti refers, especially in *Clear Words*, is Bhāvaviveka (500–570 CE), who composed a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*, entitled *Verses on the Essence of the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakahṛdāyakārikā*).[109] Bhāvaviveka wrote a prose commentary on his own verses called the *Blaze of Reasoning* (*Tarkajvālā*).[110] In this work Bhāvaviveka criticizes Buddhapālita for failing to employ independent reasoning to support Nāgārjuna's arguments for the thesis that phenomena do not independently exist. In *Clear Words* Candrakīrti defends Buddhapālita's interpretation. He argues that it would have been improper for Buddhapālita to employ independent reasoning to support the arguments Nāgārjuna uses to undermine the views of the reificationists, since the use of such reasoning would have implied that Nāgārjuna himself accepted the truth of the reificationists' premises in which it is asserted or presupposed that their subjects exist by their own nature.

Tibetan scholars distinguish two different Mādhyamika Schools. The first is a school of Mādhyamika philosophers who accept Bhāvaviveka's view that independent reasoning may be used to support Nāgārjuna's arguments, and the second is a school of Mādhyamika philosophers who do not. They called those who accept Bhāvaviveka's view the Svātantrika-Mādhyamikas (Independent-Reasoning Middle Way School Followers of the Middle Way) and those who accept Candrakīrti's view the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas (Consequence Middle Way School Followers).

In the fourteenth century CE Tsongkhapa argued that Bhāvaviveka's practice of using independent reasoning to support Nāgārjuna's arguments is based on the assumption that what does not exist by itself can by convention exist by itself. The underlying idea is that Bhāvaviveka thinks that independent reasoning can be used to support Nāgārjuna's arguments because that reasoning relies on the assumption that by convention a self exists apart from being conceived rather

than on the assumption that a self exists apart from being conceived, An extended debate ensued in Tibet about whether or not Tsongkhapa's full account of why Bhāvaviveka thinks independent reasoning can be used to explain Nāgārjuna's arguments.[111] I will not discuss the subtle questions to which this dispute gives rise, since it does not seem to improve our understanding of Candrakīrti's arguments in the Commentary.

Although Candrakīrti includes in the Commentary quotations from a number of different Mahāyāna sūtras, he includes only śāstra quotations from Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*.

The ten stages of the Bodhisattva path of meditation and its fruit

In his commentary on 1.1–4 Candrakīrti says that he has composed the *Introduction* to help sentient beings become free from their suffering in saṃsāra. He praises the great compassion that Bodhisattvas develop for suffering beings, since Buddhas are born from Bodhisattvas, who are born from this great compassion, unlike the Śravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, who are born from Buddhas. In the third of these introductory verses Candrakīrti pays homage to the suffering beings who are the objects of compassion.

> 1.3
> *Homage to compassion for migrators who are powerless,*
> *like a bucket falling in a well, because they*
> *first conceive a self and then develop attachment to things*
> *by conceiving them as its possessions.*

When migrators conceive a self they conceive a self as existing by itself. When they conceive the possessions of a self they conceive the possessions of a self that exists by itself as existing by themselves. Attachment is the mind tightly grasping onto the false appearance of the unqualified existence of a self and its possessions.

Candrakīrti says that those who wander in saṃsāra are powerless because they are under the power of contaminated actions. They helplessly wander from one rebirth to the next because they are bound by the twelve links of the chain that Buddha explained as binding them to the rebirth process.[112] To break this chain, the Buddha taught, migrators need to destroy the ignorance that contaminates their actions and binds them to saṃsāra. Wisdom is the force that is needed to free them from bondage. In 1.4ab Candrakīrti adds that those who wander in saṃsāra are both impermanent and without natures by virtue of which they exist. In the remainder of the *Introduction* Candrakīrti explains the ten stages of the Bodhisattva path of meditation and its fruit.

In the remaining verses of the first chapter Candrakīrti says that the Bodhisattvas who complete the first stage of this path, which is called "the joyous," are born into the Buddha's family, have abandoned the learned forms of the transient

collection view,[113] have abandoned erroneous doubts, do not engage in unwholesome moral practices, abide in great joy, and cease to be ordinary beings. Bodhisattvas are superior to the Śravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, he says, because they have developed bodhicitta. The special quality of those who have attained this stage is that they excel in the practice of the perfection of generosity.

In 2.1–10 Candrakīrti explains the second stage, which is called "the immaculate" because in it Bodhisattvas excel in the practice of the perfection of moral discipline. The perfection of moral discipline is the thought, motivated by bodhicitta, not to harm sentient beings by actions of body, speech, or mind. Bodhisattvas practice the perfection of moral discipline with knowledge of the emptiness of the agent that performs an action, the emptiness of the action performed, and the emptiness of the object of the action. Candrakīrti says that the practice of generosity does not prevent one from taking a lower rebirth, but the practice of moral discipline does. The Buddha is said to have taught the practice of moral discipline after teaching the practice of generosity because it is unwise for one to practice generosity without considering the kind of rebirth in which he or she would experience its results. The practice of moral discipline is said to be a cause of both high status in the realms of saṃsāra and the definite goodness of nirvāṇa.

In 3.1–13 Candrakīrti explains the third stage, which is called "the luminous" because the wisdom attained on it is like a fire whose light destroys the darkness of dualistic appearances. Dualistic appearances are phenomena that both appear to the mind and appear to the mind to exist by themselves. Only phenomena that appear to the mind to exist by themselves are to be abandoned on the path.[114] When Bodhisattvas arise from this meditation they experience a coppery glow that pervades their environment. They now excel in the practice of the perfection of patience. The perfection of patience is practiced with knowledge of the emptiness of the object of anger, the emptiness of the one who is angry, and the emptiness of anger itself. In 3.12 Candrakīrti says that the practice of the first three perfections enable Bodhisattvas to collect merit for producing the Emanation Body (*nirmānakāya*, *sprul sku*) of a Buddha.[115] In 3.13 he concludes that Bodhisattvas who reach this stage never again become angry.

In 4.1–2 Candrakīrti briefly explains the fourth stage, called "the radiant." Bodhisattvas now excel in the practice of the perfection of joyful effort, which is a wholesome mind motivated by bodhicitta that enables Bodhisattvas to delight in the practices of the path. The successful practice of the other perfections depends upon the successful practice of the perfection of joyful effort. At this stage Bodhisattvas become successful in their meditation on the thirty-seven realizations conducive to enlightenment.[116] For this reason they gain a radiant appearance. Bodhisattvas are no longer motivated to perform actions in dependence upon conceiving phenomena as existing by themselves.

In 5.1 the fifth stage is explained. In his commentary on the verse Candrakīrti says that it is called "the unconquerable" because Bodhisattvas can no longer be conquered by demons or their followers. Bodhisattvas at this stage excel in the practice of the perfection of concentration. The perfection of concentration is a

fully accomplished one-pointedness of mind motivated by bodhicitta. Bodhisattvas excel in the realization that the four realities do not exist by their own natures, even on a subtle level, since they have completely overcome the obstacles of mental dullness and agitation. In his Commentary on the verse Candrakīrti also distinguishes the four realities from conventional and ultimate reality and conventional reality from ultimate reality. His conceptions of conventional reality and ultimate reality I will explain below in some detail.

The sixth stage is called "the manifesting" because emptiness fully manifests in meditation. In dependence upon having perfected concentration Bodhisattvas excel in the practice of the perfection of wisdom. In dependence upon the perfection of wisdom Bodhisattvas fully understand what it means to exist dependently, since the direct apprehension of emptiness enables the mind to be aware of an object as it is, without existence by itself. This helps to develop the mind's ability simultaneously to apprehend, as a Buddha, a dependently existing object and its emptiness.

Candrakīrti organizes his presentation of the perfection of wisdom as a series of debates between himself and the Tīrthikas and between himself and his fellow Indian Buddhists. He composes these debates to help Mādhyamikas to eliminate what misunderstandings they may have about the doctrine of emptiness.

6.1
In the manifesting [stage], with his mind abiding in meditative equipoise,
he approaches the state of perfect Buddhahood.
He sees the way dependently co-arising phenomena are,
and by abiding in wisdom he obtains cessation.

The way dependently co-arising phenomena are is without independent existence. The cessation that arises by abiding in wisdom is the third of the four realities. Not until the eighth stage is reached will cessation be complete. But at this sixth stage the wisdom of the Bodhisattvas is said to be of sufficient strength to give them a complete mastery of the doctrines of the two realities and their dependent co-arising.

6.2
Just as one endowed with sight
can easily lead many who are blind to where they wish to go,
so it is here with wisdom,
which leads the blind perfections to victory.

The perfection of wisdom is like a sighted person who can lead the blind to where they wish to go. The first five perfections, like the blind, need to be led by the perfection of wisdom if they are to carry Bodhisattvas along the path to Buddhahood. Victory is victory over the mental afflictions.

6.3
How the profound teaching is to be realized
through reasoning and scripture was explained
in the works of the noble Nāgārjuna. I will explain it
according to the traditional understanding of these works.

Candrakīrti says that he will employ Nāgārjuna's reasonings and appeal to the sūtras to present the Madhyamaka teachings on ultimate reality. He says in his commentary that in the sūtras it was predicted that Nāgārjuna would come to explain the true intent of the Buddha's teachings. For this reason he is certain that Nāgārjuna's explanations are correct.

6.4
When ordinary beings who hear
about emptiness repeatedly feel joy
and their eyes fill with tears,
and the hairs on their skin stand up,

6.5
they are [suitable] vessels for instruction on the way things are.[117]
They possess the seed of a Buddha's mind.
Ultimate reality should be revealed to those
in whom the aforesaid qualities appear.

Candrakīrti here explains who the suitable candidates are for the teaching of the doctrine of emptiness. The above-mentioned reactions they would have to hearing the teachings on emptiness are due to the merit they acquired in their past lives and/or in the earlier part of their present lives.

6.6
They will always practice pure moral discipline,
practice generosity, develop compassion,
meditate on patience, and dedicate merit
so that all migrators might obtain nirvāṇa.

6.7
They will venerate the perfect Bodhisattva.
Since those who are skilled in ways profound and vast
will gradually obtain the stage of perfect joy, they will
listen to [the teachings on] the path because they want to reach this [stage].

These are the qualities practitioners possess that show that they will practice well the other perfections with bodhicitta, venerate all Bodhisattvas, and master all

that needs to be accomplished. Candrakīrti exhorts all suitable practitioners to listen carefully to teachings on the perfection of wisdom. In his commentary he quotes the *Sūtra on the Ten Stages*, in which "the ten equalities of all phenomena" that are realized at the sixth stage are enumerated. Among these is the equality of all phenomena. Candrakīrti believes that the equality of all phenomena was established by Nāgārjuna in *Treatise* 1.1. All phenomena are equal in being produced in dependence upon causes and conditions.

Candrakīrti explains on the basis of reasoning and scripture the selflessness of phenomena other than persons (6.8–119) and the selflessness of persons (6.120–65). He extends the argument he uses to establish the selflessness of persons to establish the selflessness of phenomena and replies to an objection (6.166–78). He explains the different classifications of emptiness (6.179–223), and then reiterates the qualities of the sixth stage (6.224–6).

In *Treatise* 1.1 Nāgārjuna argues that although phenomena are produced from causes and conditions, phenomena that exist by themselves cannot be produced. The conclusion of this argument Candrakīrti presents in the *Commentary* at 6.8. The argument has four parts, the first two of which are that (i) whether things exist independently or not, they are not produced from themselves (6.9–13) and (ii) if phenomena exist by themselves, they are not produced from other phenomena (6.14–44), which leads to the formulation of objections to four Cittamātra School theses. Candrakīrti objects to the theses that (a) a mind exists by itself and external objects do not (6.45–61), (b) the objects of mind are produced from seeds planted by actions in a foundation consciousness[118] (6.62–71), (c) dependently arising phenomena[119] exist (6.72–83), and (d) the scriptures teach the doctrine that only mind exists by itself (6.84–97). Candrakīrti then argues that (iii) phenomena are not produced both from themselves and from phenomena other than themselves (6.98), and (iv) they do not arise without having been produced (6.99–103). He concludes that (v) phenomena do not exist by themselves, since they are produced from causes and conditions (6.104). He then replies to objections to his argument (6.105–19).

In 6.120 Candrakīrti informs Bodhisattvas that if they are to achieve the perfection of wisdom they need to establish the selflessness of persons. The selflessness of persons is the absence of the object of the conception of a self in the causal basis of its conception. Its absence is established by the refutation of the existence of this object in the causal basis of its conception.[120] If this object exists by itself, it must be either other than or the same as the aggregates. But it is not other than the aggregates, as the Tīrthikas imply it is (6.121), since it is not born and a self not born does not exist (6.122); it does not exist either by its own nature or by convention (6.122); and it does not possess the properties the Tīrthikas argue it possesses, since it does not exist (6.123). In any case a self cannot be conceived unless the aggregates can be conceived, and a self other than the aggregates is not the object conceived (6.124). It cannot be replied that even though we may not in this life have knowledge of a self other than the aggregates, we possess the conception of such a self because of previous

habituation. Candrakīrti objects that this reply is inadequate because we conceive a self apart from any such habituation (6.125).

The Sāṃmitīyas infer that since a self other than the aggregates does not exist, a collection of aggregates or minds must be a self (6.126). The self with which they identify a collection of aggregates or minds may be a person-property self or a self without person-properties. If it is a person-property self, the sameness thesis is that the conception of a self refers to a collection of aggregates or minds. If it is a self without person-properties the sameness thesis is that a self is the same as a collection of aggregates or minds. If a collection of aggregates or minds is a self, as the Sāṃmitīyas claim, then a self is many selves rather than one and it is a substance, since the aggregates are many and Sāṃmitīyas think that the aggregates and minds are substances (6.127). A self would pass away at the time of its parinirvāṇa, since the aggregates do; and since the Sāṃmitīyas think that different aggregates are produced moment by moment, different selves would be produced moment by moment, so that a self would not collect the results of its actions and a different self would collect the results of its actions (6.128).

Candrakīrti has the Sāṃmitīyas reply that the convention of assigning person-properties to a self is explained by the aggregates being in a causal continuum, and he objects that he has already refuted their view that a causal continuum of the aggregates exists (6.129abc). He adds that another unacceptable consequence is that the Buddha would not have refused to answer the famous fourteen questions about a self, since the questions would then have answers (6.129d). If a collection of aggregates or minds is a self, he argues, the realization of the selflessness of persons is the realization that aggregates or minds do not independently exist (6.130ab). Candrakīrti gives two reasons why it cannot be replied that the realization of the selflessness of persons is the realization that a permanent self does not independently exist (6.130bc–31). He then considers the Sāṃmitīyas' reply that the Buddha himself said that the aggregates are a self. He poses objections to their claim that the Buddha said this (6.132–3). Candrakīrti argues that from this claim it follows that (i) a self would not possess person-properties, since a collection of aggregates does not exist by itself; (ii) a collection of the parts of a chariot, by analogy, would be, but is not, a chariot; and (iii) a self would not be conceived, as it is, in dependence upon a collection of aggregates (6.134–5).

Nor can it be replied, he says, that a configuration of aggregates is a self, just as a chariot is a configuration of its parts is a chariot, since a self would then not possess mental aggregates (6.136). Other unacceptable consequences of a collection of aggregates being a self are that an acquirer of the aggregates would be the same as the aggregates it acquires (6.137) and that a self would not exist in dependence upon a collection of aggregates (6.138–9). Candrakīrti completes his primary examination of the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis by calling attention to the absurdity of saying that the selflessness of persons is the absence of the independent existence of a permanent self (6.140–1).

Candrakīrti argues that since a self does not exist by itself it is not present in the aggregates, it is not that in which the aggregates are present, and it is not a

possessor of the aggregates (6.142–3). He concludes that when he refutes the independent existence of a self (i) that is the same as the aggregates, (ii) that is present in the aggregates, (iii) that is that in which the aggregates are present, and (iv) that possesses the aggregates, he has presented the Buddha's refutation of the twenty learned forms of the transient collection view (6.144–5).

Candrakīrti explains and rejects as inconsistent the thesis of the Āryasāṃmitīyas that a self independently exists that is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates (6.146–9). He adds, using a chariot as an example, that even though the independent existence of a self has been refuted, its existence has not been unqualifiedly denied, since it is dependently conceived (6.150–62). He concludes that nothing can be asserted or denied of a self that exists by its own nature, since such a self does not exist at all (6.163), that a self is an unanalyzed convention (6.164), and that freedom from saṃsāra is attained when the transient collection view is abandoned (6.165). He extends this argument for the selflessness of persons to phenomena other than a self, defends the extended argument against objections (6.166–78), classifies the different sorts of emptiness (6.179–223), and lists the qualities of the sixth stage (6.224–6).

The seventh stage of the Bodhisattva path of meditation, he says, is called "the far advanced" because all dualistic perceptions of phenomena cease to exist. He describes it in the first three lines of one verse. At this stage Bodhisattvas excel in the practice of the perfection of "skillful means" (*thabs*, *upāya*). By acquiring this perfection they are better able to help sentient beings free themselves from suffering. Bodhisattvas are also now said to be able to rise at will from meditation on emptiness.

The description of the eighth stage begins in the last line of the verse whose first three lines describe the seventh stage. Because Bodhisattvas can no longer lose their attainments, this stage is called "the immovable." The next two-and-a-half verses continue the description of this stage. Candrakīrti says that the prayers learned by Bodhisattvas at the first stage are now fully purified. Bodhisattvas are no longer born in saṃsāra, since all mental afflictions have been eliminated. Their vows are perfected and they begin to develop the ten powers of Buddhas.

The ninth stage is described in the last two lines of the verse, the first two lines of which complete the description of the eighth stage. At this ninth stage Bodhisattvas are said to achieve the perfection of the ten powers and to complete their knowledge of all phenomena.

At the tenth stage, which is described in a single verse, Bodhisattvas are said to be empowered by the Buddhas to manifest themselves spontaneously whenever and wherever their presence is needed to help sentient beings free themselves from suffering in saṃsāra. The perfection of wisdom is fully achieved at this stage.

There are three remaining chapters of the *Commentary*. The first of the three explains, in nine verses, the qualities of the ten stages. The second explains, in forty-two verses, the Buddhahood that results from having passed through the

stages of the Bodhisattva path; and the last explains, in five verses, how the *Introduction* was composed.

In the last chapter of the *Commentary* Candrakīrti says that the Vaibhāṣikas, Sautrāntikas, Pudgalavādins, Vasubandhu,[121] Digṅāga, Dharmapāla, and others put forth systems of thought of their own out of fear of the doctrine of emptiness, which in the *Introduction* he has explained on the basis of Nāgārjuna's *Treatise*, the sūtras, and the teachings he has received. That the Sāṃmitīyas and Āryasāṃmitīyas are not mentioned in this list of schools suggests that they are identified with some or all of the schools mentioned. He says that the Mādhyamikas do not assert, as some have claimed they assert, that the phenomena thought by the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣikas and the original Sautrāntikas to be ultimate realities are conventional realities. In the last verses he dedicates the merit of composing the verses to the realization of emptiness by all sentient beings.

Part III: On Candrakīrti's terminology and its philosophical import

There are a number of important Sanskrit terms used by Candrakīrti in both the *Commentary* and *Clear Words* whose different meanings are not always explained and whose translations into English are not standardized. For this reason it may help readers of the Commentary to have the meanings and translations of these terms explained. There are a few Sanskrit words in common use that are employed with special meanings by Candrakīrti, and these too need to be explained. Since I am translating the Tibetan translation of a Sanskrit text, readers sometimes need to be informed not only about the meanings of the original Sanskrit terms, but also about the meanings of the Tibetan terms used to translate them. Scholars often disagree about what exactly these Sanskrit and Tibetan terms mean and how to translate them. My explanations of Candrakīrti's technical terms and technical employment of commonly used Sanskrit terms are brief. They are not presented to resolve disputes about their meanings and translations because to do so is a rather lengthy undertaking and this is not the place to do it; my purpose in presenting them is to help my readers to understand the translation of the Commentary.

"Self"

In the original Sanskrit text of the Commentary Candrakīrti sometimes uses *ātman*, whose Tibetan translation, *bdag*, I translate with one exception as "self" to signify either a person-property self or a self without person-properties. Candrakīrti, I believe, assumes that a person-property self is a self that possesses aggregates and that a self without person-properties is a self that acquires the aggregates. Sometimes Candrakīrti uses *ātman* to refer both to a person-property self and to a self without person-properties. He also uses *ātman* to refer both to independent existence and to a self that exists by its own nature.

In C120 Candrakīrti announces that he is about to discuss the selflessness of persons. In "selflessness" the word "self" is used to refer to independent existence. So the selflessness of persons is a self not existing by itself. In "the selflessness of persons" the term "persons" refers both to person-property selves and to selves without person-properties. When Candrakīrti refers to the selflessness of phenomena, he is referring to all things other than persons not existing by their own nature.

In Indian Buddhist philosophical schools other than that of Candrakīrti I believe that "self" in "the selflessness of persons" refers to independent existence and "persons" refers to person-property selves. Their denial of the independent existence of person-property selves is not based on the denial that a self without person-properties exists by itself. Candrakīrti also denies that a person-property self exists by itself, but his denial is ultimately based on the denial that a self without person-properties exists by itself. He believes that a self without person-properties is a mentally constructed self that is an acquirer of the aggregates.

"Svabhāva" and "emptiness"

Of special importance for an understanding of Candrakīrti's theory of persons is his use of svabhāva (*rang bzhin*). This term has been translated in a wide variety of ways. It has been translated as "own-being," "inherent existence," "self-existence," "essential existence," "intrinsic existence," "self-existent nature," "identity," "inherent identity," "intrinsic identity," "intrinsic reality," "independent reality," and "essence." The variety of ways in which it has been translated creates a problem for readers who read different translations of Candrakīrti's treatises. I try to help readers to deal with this problem by leaving the term untranslated in my translations of the Commentary and passages of *Clear Words* and by identifying its different meanings in my comments on its use. My comments are based on the assumption, shared by most scholars of Indian Buddhism, that "svabhāva" is used by Candrakīrti in three different ways. The first is to refer to a thing's true svabhāva of not existing by its own nature, the second is to refer to a thing's false svabhāva of existing by its own nature, and the third is to refer to a thing's conventional svabhāva, which is a thing's defining property or properties.

The "svabhāva" that is used to refer to a thing's true svabhāva of not existing by its own nature I call a thing's true intrinsic nature, but I might equally have called it a thing's inherent existence, self-existence, and so on. A thing's false svabhāva of existing by its own nature I call its false intrinsic nature, though I might equally have called it a thing's false essence. A thing's svabhāva as its defining property or properties I will call its conventional nature, though I might have called it its conventional essence.

It is in 158 that Candrakīrti refers to a thing's nature of existing by itself as "a false svabhāva" (*mi bden rang bzhin*).[122] The idea is that a thing's appearance of

existing by its own nature is a false appearance of its true intrinsic nature. A thing's false svabhāva, like a dead man, which only appears to be a man, only appears to be its true intrinsic nature. A thing's false svabhāva is its false appearance of existing without dependence upon anything else. For those who are prepared to meditate on the true intrinsic nature of all things, Candrakīrti says, the Buddha taught that the svabhāva of all things is their "absence of svabhāva" (*naiḥsvabhāvya*).[123] In this case the "svabhāva of all things" is their true intrinsic nature and their "absence of svabhāva" is their absence of a false intrinsic nature. The true intrinsic nature of all things is called emptiness.

Candrakīrti thinks that "svabhāva" is used to refer to a conventional nature when it signifies a property or set of properties of a thing that always comes to be and passes away when the thing does, but this same property or set of properties, when it belongs to something else, does not always come to be and pass away when it does. So heat is said in India to be the svabhāva of fire, since it always comes to be and passes away when fire does, but it is said not to be the svabhāva of water, because it does not always come to be and pass away when water does.[124] This is not, however, a definition of a conventional nature; it is an explanation of the conditions under which a property or set of properties is said to be the conventional nature of something. The conventional nature of something is the property or set of properties it possesses by virtue of which it is by convention distinguished from things differently conceived. Candrakīrti uses "svabhāva" according to its meaning as a conventional nature in C121, C134ab, C125cd, C150abc, and C157cd. In 156 and C156 he uses it to refer to a thing's false intrinsic nature.

Candrakīrti's opponents I call "reificationists," who are those Candrakīrti believes reify the objects of conception in the sense of asserting or presupposing that some or all of the objects unqualifiedly exist when in fact they exist only in a qualified way. Reificationists believe or assume that a thing's false svabhāva is its true svabhāva. The sort of theory of persons Candrakīrti rejects is "a reificationist theory of persons." A reificationist theory of person is the theory that a self exists by itself in spite of the fact that it does not.

Candrakīrti wishes to free us from two forms of reificationism, one of which may be called "innate reificationism" and the other, "philosophical reificationism." The innate form of reificationism is not a theory; it is what Candrakīrti assumes to be the fact that we instinctively reify the objects of conception. Even phenomena we by convention conceive not to exist, he believes, are reified by us, since in order to deny their existence we need to conceive them. Philosophical reificationism may be defined as the theory according to which some or all phenomena exist by their own nature. Innate reificationism is refuted when philosophical reificationism is refuted, using arguments that show the unacceptable consequences of its adoption.[125] An unqualified form of philosophical reificationism would be that everything existing exists by its own nature; a qualified form would be that some things exist by their own nature and others do not.

"Conventional reality" and "ultimate reality"

Central to Candrakīrti's theory of persons is the idea that a self is a conventional reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*, *kun rdzob bden pa*) whose ultimate reality (*paramārthasatya*, *don dam bden pa*) is its emptiness. Different interpretations of Candrakīrti's accounts of these two realities have been presented by Tibetan scholars. An explanation of the different Tibetan Buddhist interpretations of Candrakīrti's account of the two realities is included in Guy Newland's *Appearance & Reality*.[126] A more detailed account of the interpretations of Tsongkhapa and Gorampa can be found in Sonam Thakchoe's *The Two Truths Debate*.[127] The difference between these interpretations will not be discussed here, since an adequate discussion of the differences would involve a too lengthy digression from this account of his theory of persons. Since I assume the correctness of Tsongkhapa's interpretation of Candrakīrti's doctrine of the two realities, without a full discussion of the arguments for and against the interpretation or the arguments for and against the interpretations presented by other Tibetan scholars, I encourage readers to follow up their study of my reconstruction of Candrakīrti's theory of persons with a careful study of these different interpretations of his doctrine of the two realities.

I believe that *saṃvṛtisatya* is used by Candrakīrti in at least two different ways. This is shown by what he says, first of all, in his *Clear Words* commentary on *Treatise* 24.8, and then in verses 23 and 28 of the sixth chapter of the *Introduction*. In his commentary on *Treatise* 24.8 Candrakīrti explains what he believes to be three meanings of *saṃvṛti* (*kun rdzob*). He says that *saṃvṛti* can refer either (i) to what entirely obstructs the svabhāva,[128] in which case it refers to the conceptual mind that apprehends its object, (ii) to mutual dependence, in which case it refers to the dependent co-arising of the objects of mind, or (iii) to name and conception, in which case it refers to names and conceptions by convention used to refer to objects.

When *saṃvṛti* occurs in *saṃvṛtisatya* it refers to what entirely obstructs the svabhāva of an object. What entirely obscures the svabhāva of an object is the conceptual mind that completely obstructs the true intrinsic nature of its object. *Satya* in *saṃvṛtisatya* refers to what appears to the conceptual mind to be a reality. A conventional reality in this sense is an object that appears to be a reality for a mind that completely obscures its true intrinsic nature. A *saṃvṛtisatya* or conventional reality in this sense is a false reality.

When *saṃvṛti* in *saṃvṛtisatya* is used to refer to mutual dependence it refers to a reality that exists in dependence upon something else. A dependently existing reality is not a false reality or a reality for a mind that entirely obscures the true intrinsic nature of its object; it is a reality for a mind that experiences a dependently existing object as a dependently existing object.

It is not clear to me whether or not Candrakīrti uses *saṃvṛti* in *saṃvṛtisatya* to refer to a name and conception. If it does, a *saṃvṛtisatya* or conventional reality is a nominal or conceptual reality. My translation of *saṃvṛtisatya* as

"a conventional reality" is based on the assumption that an object that is *saṃvṛtisatya* in one of the first two senses of the term is an object that is real by convention.

Candrakīrti calls upon both the first and second meaning of *saṃvṛti* in 6.28:

> *Because confusion obscures the svabhāva, it is saṃvṛti.*
> *What it creates appears as satya.*
> *So the Muni*[129] *called it saṃvṛtisatya.*
> *The things it creates are saṃvṛti.*

"Confusion" (*moha*, *gti mug*) is used to refer to the conceptual mind. The svabhāva of its object is emptiness. This confusion is the first of the twelve links of the chain of the dependent arising of saṃsāra. This conceptual mind we need to abandon if we are to escape saṃsāra. In 6.28a Candrakīrti says that this mind is *saṃvṛti* because it obscures the true svabhāva of its object, and in 6.28bc he says that because the object it creates appears to it as *satya*, i.e. as a reality, the Buddha calls the object this mind creates *saṃvṛtisatya*, a reality for a mind that obscures the svabhāva of its object. But when in 6.28d Candrakīrti says that the things created by the mind that obscures the svabhāva are *saṃvṛti* what he means, according to Tsongkhapa, is that they are *saṃvṛti* in the sense of being dependently co-existing. When Candrakīrti employs *saṃvṛti* in this sense he means that the objects whose intrinsic nature is obscured by confusion in fact exist in dependence upon other objects. So in *Introduction* 6.28 Candrakīrti is saying that there is a mind that conceptually creates objects in dependence upon other objects it creates, and that this mind totally obscures the intrinsic nature of the objects it creates, which is their absence of existence by themselves.

An ultimate reality is a reality for a mind that experiences the true intrinsic nature of its object. An ultimate reality is the true reality of an object of the mind. A false reality is an object's "false svabhāva" (*mi bden rang bzhin*).[130] A false svabhāva is an intrinsic nature by virtue of whose possession something that does not exist by itself appears to exist by itself. When it is said that an object of the mind is either a conventional reality or an ultimate reality, the conception of conventional reality employed is the conception of a reality for the mind that entirely obscures the intrinsic nature of its object. The two realities, in opposition to one another, are the false and true intrinsic natures of an object. In order to avoid confusion, Gelugpa scholars sometimes refer to a conventional reality in the sense of being a reality that dependently co-arises as "a conventionality" (*tha snyad* or *kun rdzob*) or as what is real "conventionally" (*tha snyad du* or *kun rdzob tu*), which in Sanskrit means *vyavahāratas* or *saṃvṛtyā*, or perhaps just *vyavahāra* or *saṃvṛti*.

In *Introduction* 6.23 Candrakīrti explains the two realities from the perspective of how dependently co-arising phenomena are apprehended:

Because all things[131] *can be seen incorrectly or correctly*
they are said to possess two natures.[132]
It is said that objects seen correctly are the way things are[133]
and when seen incorrectly are saṃvṛtisatya.

The "things" in 6.23a are conventional realities as dependently co-arising phenomena. The "two natures" in 6.23b are the true and false intrinsic natures of these conventional realities. In 6.23c Candrakīrti refers to the true reality of conventional realities as the way they are. In 6.23d he says that these dependently co-arising conventional realities, when seen incorrectly, are realities for a mind that entirely obscures the true svabhāva of its object. So a conventional reality as it appears to this conceptual mind is a deceptive reality because it falsely appears to exist by itself. According to 6.23 the two realities are two different intrinsic natures dependently arising conventional realities possess. Each intrinsic nature is seen by a different mind. The conceptual mind incorrectly sees its object as existing by itself, and a nonconceptual mind correctly sees its object as not existing by itself. The mind that correctly sees the way things are is a nonconceptual mind that experiences their ultimate reality. The mind that incorrectly sees dependently arising conventional realities is the conceptual mind.

In C132 Candrakīrti refers to a self as "a conventional reality." For the sake of showing that this self is not other than the aggregates, he says, the Buddha said that only the aggregates are perceived by Śramaṇas and Brahmins when they perceive a self. He claims that when the Buddha said this, he was arguing that there is no permanent self, since only the impermanent aggregates are perceived by Śramaṇas and Brahmins who look for a self among the phenomena in dependence which it is conceived. Since a collection of aggregates is the causal basis of the conception of a self, a self cannot be other than the aggregates in the way cloth is other than a pot.

In C162 Candrakīrti refers both to a chariot and to a self as "a conventional reality." In his introduction to 162 he says that a chariot is established as dependently conceived so that "a conventional reality will not be destroyed," meaning that if he had not shown that a chariot is dependently conceived, the refutation of its existence would have appeared to be the unqualified denial of its existence. Candrakīrti is here using "a conventional reality" to refer to a dependent co-arising reality rather than to a reality for a mind that entirely obscures the true intrinsic nature of its object.

"Conception," "is conceived," "dependently conceived," and "real by way of a conception"

Two important Sanskrit expressions Candrakīrti uses in a technical way are *prajñapti* and *prajñapyate*. In my translation of the Commentary, *btags pa*, which is the Tibetan translation of *prajñapti*, is translated as "a conception" and *btags*, which is a translation of *prajñapyate*, is translated as "is conceived." *Prajñapti*

is used by Indian Buddhist philosophers to refer to a name or to a conception, and *prajñapyate* means "is named or conceived." Since Indian Buddhist philosophers believe that naming is the verbal expression of conceiving, I have simplified their translation, rendering the Tibetan translation of *prajñapti* as "a conception" and the Tibetan translation of *prajñapyate* as "is conceived." Candrakīrti believes that what is conceived is conceived in dependence upon something else. The work done by the conception of an object is to be explained, he thinks, by the functionally established conventions of the world, which are based on the formation of the conception of an object in dependence upon something else that is conceived in dependence upon it.

The Tibetan expression *btags pa*, which is used to translate *prajñapti*, means "a label" for something, and *btags*, which is used to translate *prajñapyate*, means "is labeled." These translations nicely capture the idea, conveyed by *prajñapti* and *prajñapyate*, that a *prajñapti* is either a name or a conception and that *prajñapti* includes the idea that a name or a conception is being applied to an object of mind. Few translators of Tibetan philosophical texts into English, however, use "label" and "is labeled" to translate these terms. Some Western scholars translate *prajñapti* as "designation" and translate *prajñapyate* as "is designated," which can mean "label" and "is labeled." The translations favored by many Western scholars closely allied to the Tibetan tradition of scholarship are "imputation" and "is imputed."

An important expression used in the Tibetan translation of the Commentary is *brten nas gdags par bya ba* (*upādāya prajñapyate*), which I translate as "is dependently conceived." In *Treatise* 24.18 Nāgārjuna says that

> *What dependently arises*
> *is explained as emptiness.*
> *Since that is dependently conceived,*
> *it is itself the middle way.*

In 24.18ab "What dependently arises is explained as emptiness" means that the Buddha said that what dependently arises does not exist by itself. It does not mean that the meaning of "dependently arising" is "emptiness." What is meant in 24.18c by saying that emptiness is "dependently conceived" is that emptiness is conceived in dependence upon that which is empty of independent existence. So when emptiness is conceived, it is dependently conceived. If emptiness were not dependently conceived, it would be conceived on the basis of its own existence, and if emptiness were to be conceived on the basis of its own existence, it would not, as 24.18d says, be the middle way. The middle way is the way between independent existence and no existence at all.

Finally the expression, *prajñaptisat* (*btag yod*), as used by Candrakīrti means "real by way of a conception." This is the customary contrast to *dravyasat* (*rdzas yod*), which I translate as "substantially real." Candrakīrti uses *dravyasat* to refer to what exists by itself. So what does not exist by itself may still be real by way of a conception.

"The conception of a self" and "the conception of the possessions of a self"

The term *ahaṃkāra* as used by Candrakīrti has been translated as "the conception of an I," "the sense of an I," "instinctual I-habit," "ego-grasping," "ego-conception," "self-fixation," "self-habit," and the like. What makes these different translations possible is that *ahaṃkāra* is both conceiving a self as existing by itself and grasping at it as existing by itself. In its Tibetan translation, *ngar 'dzin*, this ambiguity is preserved in *'dzin*, which can mean "apprehending" both in the sense of mind conceiving an object and in the sense of the mind grasping on to the object. It is to show that grasping at a self as existing by itself is part of what is meant by *ngar 'dzin* that many translators translate it as "grasping at a self," "self-grasping," "clinging to a self," and so forth. The full sense of *ngar 'dzin* would seem to be that of conceiving and grasping at a self. Since a self needs to be conceived if grasping at it is to occur, I have simplified my translation of *ngar 'dzin* to "the conception of a self" and "conceiving a self." Moreover, since *ahaṃkāra*, of which *ngar 'dzin* is a translation, signifies a maker of a self or the making of a self, and to make a self is to conceive it, I have another reason to employ these translations, I also translate *ahaṃ* (*ngar*) in this construction as "self" rather than as "an I," " 'I'," or "ego," since these are simply expressions of the Buddhist idea that the object of the first-person singular pronoun is a self.

Paired with Candrakīrti's use of *ahaṃkāra* (*ngar 'dzin*) is another compound, *mamakāra* (*bdag gir 'dzin pa*). In this compound *mama* is the Sanskrit word for the first-person singular possessive pronoun "mine" and its associated conception. The compound *mamakāra*, which in Sanskrit literally means "mine-maker" or "mine-making," is translated here as "the conception of the possessions of a self" when it is used to refer to the mine-maker, and as "conceiving the possessions of a self" when used to refer to mine-making.

There seems to be no important point of doctrine that is affected by my translation of Candrakīrti's use of *ahaṃkāra* as "the conception of a self" and "conceiving a self" and of his use of *mamakāra* as "the conception of the possessions of a self" and "conceiving the possessions of a self." What many would translate as "a mine does not exist unless an I exists," therefore, is translated here as "things as possessions of a self do not exist unless a self does." In agreement with these translations *ngar 'dzin blo* in 124cd is translated as "mind conceiving a self."

"Exist" and "do(es) not exist"

In Candrakīrti's śāstras when "exist(s)" (*asti*, *yod*) and "does not exist" (*nāsti*, *ma yod*) are employed context determines how they are to be interpreted, since these terms, like *ātman*, *svabhāva*, and *saṃvṛtisatya*, are ambiguous. "Exist(s)" can mean "exist(s) unqualifiedly," "exist(s) by itself (or independently),"

"exist(s) by its own nature," these three being interchangeable, or "do(es) not exist by convention," or it can mean "exist(s) by convention." "Do(es) not exist" can mean "do(es) not exist unqualifiedly," or "do(es) not exist by self," these two usually being interchangeable, or it can mean "do(es) not exist by convention" or "do(es) not exist at all." In my translations of Candrakīrti's uses of these terms I translate them simply as "exist(s)" and "does not exist," since this is his actual usage, but in my comments I will qualify the terms appropriately to show readers how I understand he is using them. Candrakīrti most often uses *asti* to mean "exist(s) unqualifiedly" and *nāsti* to mean "do(es) not exist unqualifiedly," since he wants to drive home the point that we mistakenly assume that what exists is what exists by itself, without qualification, and that what does not exist is what does not exist at all. In his arguments against what exists by itself he uses *asti* ("exists") to express existence by itself so that we are made to realize that we reify what we conceive to exist. Consequently, to reproduce this effect I translate *asti* and the others literally. But to make it clear what in such cases is actually meant by *asti*, in my commentaries I gloss his use of *asti* as "is substantially real," "exists by its own nature," "independently exists," "unqualifiedly exists," or "exists by itself."

To say that something exists by convention does not simply mean that people have entered into an agreement that it exists. To exist by convention is to exist according to functional criteria of conventional existence. Although most people in Europe during the Middle Ages agreed that dragons exist, it was later established, using more functional criteria, that were more fully functional, that they do not exist. As Candrakīrti speaks of what exists by convention, it is not true that in the Middle Ages dragons existed by convention and at a later time they did not.

It is not necessary for our purposes to reconstruct what Candrakīrti believes to be the functional criteria that are employed when in daily life we say that something exists. For our purposes, we need only note that Candrakīrti accepts whatever are the functionally established criteria of conventional existence. In *Introduction* 6.25 Candrakīrti presents an example of a functionally established criterion of conventional existence he thinks we normally use to determine what exists. The criterion he cites is whether or not the organs of perception employed to apprehend what we say exists are defective.

In *Treatise* 18.6–8 Nāgārjuna presents an elaborate account of the Buddha's use of *asti* in affirmations of the existence of a self and his use of *nāsti* in denials of the existence of a self. Because of its relevance to this study of Candrakīrti's theory of persons, Nāgārjuna's verses are translated here, along with the relevant parts of Candrakīrti's long commentaries on each.

Clear Words *18.6–8*

The Buddhas have employed the conception of a self,
have taught [the doctrine of] selflessness,
and have also taught

[that] a self and selflessness do not exist at all.

The idea here is that there are those whose mental eye is entirely covered by the thick dark cataracts[134] that result in the poor vision that is the perverse view that a self does not exist.[135] Though they are in the midst of everyday life, they do not perceive the world in spite of it being the obvious object of ordinary clear vision. They are intent only upon descriptions of reality that mention earth, water, fire and air. From a particular concoction of substances, such as fermented roots, grain and water, what follows are things such as drunkenness and stupefaction as a similarly particular result when ingested as an intoxicating drink. In the same way they explain that from a concoction of the great elements that begins in the embryo, minds arise. They vociferously deny the existence of past and future lives, and they refuse to admit the existence of a self and the next world, saying such things as "This world does not exist," "The next world does not exist," "Results of positive and negative actions do not exist," and "An apparitional birth does not exist." Because of this obnoxious attitude they defiantly reject heaven and freedom from suffering, which are highly desirable achievements. They are constantly and indiscriminately engaged in the performance of negative actions and face a tremendous free-fall into the hell realms. In order to counter this mistaken view the awakened Bhagavāns sometimes employ the conception of a self and posit [the existence of] a self in the world.

. . .

There are some still attached to the tough, extremely long and tenuous great tether of the mistaken view of a self as an element of reality that exists,[136] even though they have, like [tethered] birds, gone quite far. Regardless whether they are agents of wholesome actions or followers of a path of unwholesome actions, they endure birth in the three worlds. They are unable to approach the pure ageless and deathless city of nirvāṇa. Because they are [of] middling [capacity] and are in need of guidance, the awakened Bhagavāns,[137] who want to help those in need of guidance, teach [them about] selflessness to weaken their attachment to the transient collection view[138] and to inspire a desire for nirvāṇa.

There are those whose seeds [of awakening] have ripened, who have achieved tranquility and conviction about the teachings and have become distinguished through their earlier practice. For them nirvāṇa is near at hand. He has ascertained the special receptivity of those who are [of the] highest [capacity], are in need of guidance, are no longer attached to a self, and are supremely calm. They are the Bhagavāns of silence. They are fit for emersion into the reality conveyed by the teachings. [So Nāgārjuna says in *Treatise* 18.6cd that]

> *and have also taught*
> *[that] a self and selflessness do not exist at all.*

> Just as a view of a self[139] is without reality, likewise the opposite view, that a self does not exist, is not the way things are. Thus it is taught that neither self nor selflessness exists at all.

For the sake of those who like the Carvākas deny that a self exists in any way, the Buddha affirmed the thesis that a self exists, since a self exists by convention. For those who are ready to meditate on the non-existence of a self that exists by itself, Candrakīrti says, the Buddha denied the view that a self exists. For those who have had success in meditating on the non-existence of a self that exists by itself, the Buddha denies both views. In the quotation Candrakīrti uses "a view of a self" to refer to the view that a self exists by itself and opposes it to the view that a self does not exist by itself so that he can say that neither view is the way things are. Both views are to be abandoned because the way things are cannot be expressed in discourse and thought. The way things are can only be experienced by a nonconceptual mind of the sort possessed by a Buddha.

Candrakīrti says that the Buddha denied unqualified existence of a self for the sake of those who follow the Buddhist path, since it will "weaken their attachment to the transient collection view" and "inspire a desire for nirvāṇa." The view of a self and the view of the selflessness of a self are reifications which meditators are to abandon. Emptiness as experienced rather than as conceived is what frees us from suffering.

> At this point someone says "If the Bhagavāns did not teach either that a self exists or that selflessness exists, what did they teach?" We respond [in *Treatise* 18.7]:

> *What is represented is rejected*
> *when the mental domain is rejected.*
> *The true nature of phenomena,*[140]
> *which neither comes to be nor passes away, is like nirvāṇa.*

> If there were something to be represented, then that would be taught. But when what is to be represented is rejected, i.e. when there is no object of discourse or thought, then the Buddhas do not teach anything at all. Why then is there nothing that can be represented? In "when the mental domain is rejected" the expression, "mental domain," refers to the domain of the mind. A domain is an object; in other words, it is an object of the mind. If there were some domain of the mind upon which a sign could be superimposed, then discourse would be applicable. But when an object of the mind has not been found, then where is the superimposition of a sign on the basis of which discourse would be applicable?

In this passage Candrakīrti is discussing objects represented by the mind from an ultimate point of view. The ultimate point of view is the mind looking for the objects of its conceptions in the causal basis of the conceptions and not finding them there.

The rejection of the independent existence of objects of the mind is a two-step process. First, analysis is used to show that the objects do not exist by their own nature, which is how discourse and thought makes them appear to exist; second, the mind is trained in meditation to become familiar with their absence of independent existence so that it might eventually abandon the conception of them. When Candrakīrti says that "if there were something to be represented, that would be taught," he means that if the objects represented by the mind were to exist by their own nature, the Buddhas would have taught that they exist in this way. From this point of view, he adds, the Buddhas did not teach anything at all, since when the objects of the mind are seen as they are, from an ultimate point of view, they do not appear to exist by themselves. Because analysis shows that they do not exist by themselves, the objects created by mind are "rejected." Candrakīrti continues:

> Why is there is no mental domain? To provide an explanation he says [in *Treatise*18.7cd],
>
> > *The true nature of phenomena,*
> > *which neither comes to be nor passes away, is like nirvāṇa.*
>
> Like *nirvāṇa* the true nature of phenomena (the svabhāva of phenomena, the fundamental nature of phenomena) does not come to be or pass away. So the mind is not in motion in relation to that [nature]. And when the mind is not in motion, how can there be the superimposition of a sign? And since that is absent how could discourse be applied? Therefore the awakened Bhagavāns did not teach anything at all. This is without remainder the whole picture. Therefore he will say [at *Treatise* 25.4],
>
> > *The pacification of all [ordinary] perception*[141] *is*
> > *the calming of conceptualization.*
> > *The Buddha has not taught any dharma whatsoever*
> > *about anything anywhere.*

A mind in motion is a mind conceiving its object. A mind that experiences the true nature of its object is not in motion, since it is not at that time conceiving its object. The object that appears before a mind in motion is constructed by the mind in motion. This mentally constructed object is rejected because its true nature, which neither comes to be nor passes away, is like nirvāṇa. Its true nature is emptiness. Its true nature, emptiness, is like nirvāṇa because like nirvāṇa it neither comes to be nor passes away. Nirvāṇa is said neither to come to be nor to pass away because when the mind experiences emptiness it is completely

assimilated to emptiness, which neither comes to be nor passes away. Emptiness neither comes to be nor passes away because, as Candrakīrti explained in *Treatise* 15.8, emptiness does not change. The perception said to be pacified is perception of a mentally constructed object. The pacification of the mind is the calming of its motion.

> There might however be another objection: "It has been said [at *Treatise* 18.5], "Conceptualization passes away in [the realization of] emptiness." But why is there the cessation of conceptualization in [the realization of] emptiness?"
>
> It is because of what has already been said, namely, that "What is represented is rejected [when the mental domain is rejected]."
>
> And the following might also be said. "Previously, in this context it was said that the way things are is the elimination, completely and forever, of the conception of a self and of the conception of things as its possession, both internally and externally, because [such] things external and internal are not perceived. But of what sort is it? Can it be expressed in discourse?"
>
> That is why [he says in *Treatise* 18.7ab] that
>
> > *What is represented is rejected*
> > *when the mental domain is rejected.*
>
> The sentence is to be completed with "as the way things are." But why is it that what is represented is rejected when the mental domain is rejected as the way things are? He says [in *Treatise* 18.7cd] that
>
> > *the true nature of phenomena,*
> > *which neither comes to be nor passes away, is like nirvāṇa.*

Candrakīrti now introduces and comments upon *Treatise* 18.8.

> Now here someone says that if it is true that like nirvāṇa, the true nature of phenomena does not come to be or pass away, and that discourse and thought cannot be used for that [nature], then this [nature], which is not conceived, cannot be understood by people. Therefore for the sake of people in need of guidance, the introduction of that [nature] must proceed by a step-by-step teaching in dependence upon conventional reality. So that [nature] should be taught. So it is said. This step-by-step teaching of the Buddhas, which introduces the undying way things are, should be understood.
>
> > *Everything [that is real convention] exists,*
> > *does not exist, both exists and does not exist.*

and neither exists nor does not exist.
This is the [step by step] teaching of the Buddha.

Candrakīrti interprets *Treatise* 18.8 as an answer to the question: how can emptiness be taught if it does not come to be or pass way, and discourse and thought cannot be used to represent it just as it is, as not existing by its own nature? The answer he says is that the Buddha teaches emptiness by first telling his disciples that everything that is real by convention exists, later telling them that it does not exist, later still that it both exists and does not exist, and finally that it neither does nor does not exist. When Candrakīrti says that discourse and thought "cannot be used for" the true nature of phenomena he means that since discourse and thought make emptiness appear to exist by its own nature it cannot be used to show what emptiness is as experienced. The meaning is that emptiness is misrepresented by discourse and thought as existing in a way it does not. The implication is that we will not truly understand what emptiness is until we directly apprehend it.

The Buddha first teaches, according to *Treatise* 18.8, that what is real by convention exists; then he teaches them that it does not exist; next, that it both does and does not exist, and finally he teaches them that it neither does nor does not exist. What does this mean? Candrakīrti now provides details.

[It has been said:]

Whatever was acceptable to someone in the past,
that should work for him [to begin the practice].
A person who is confused
is never a [suitable] vessel for the holy teachings.

Moreover, in the scriptures the Bhagavān said:

The world has a dispute with me.
I do not have a dispute with the world.
What the world accepts I accept.
What the world does not accept I do not accept.

[And in the *Catuḥśataka* 8.19, Āryadeva says:]

Just as a foreigner is not able
to understand a language other than his own,
so the world is not able
to understand anything but the affairs of the world.

And so on. This [view, that everything that is real by convention exists, was taught] by the Bhagavān for people in need of guidance [and] in

> whom the desire has awakened to hear something about the generally accepted way in which things are actually distinguished. The aggregates, the elements, and the bases of perception are, in truth, conceptualization. They are obtained by the impaired vision of ignorance. This much of the truth has been described by the Bhagavān from that perspective for the purpose of giving rise to a more significant life for the worldly person.

In *Treatise* 18.8 Nāgārjuna says that the Buddha gradually introduces his followers to the experience of emptiness. On the first step the Buddha teaches that what is real by convention exists because his followers wished to "to hear something about the generally accepted way in which things are actually distinguished." The Buddha introduces his followers to a classification of conceptually reified phenomena they could use, in the next stage, to conduct analyses that reveal the ultimate reality of these phenomena. The conceptualization of phenomena that are real by convention is not simply rejected; it is first molded into a form that would enable the mind to reject reification.

Later in his commentary on *Treatise* 18.8 Candrakīrti briefly explains the second step.

> At a later time, when those in need of guidance have realized the Bhagavān is all-knowing, everything [real by convention] is said not to exist. In that case, what exists is what does not change. An entity that changes is found among causally conditioning phenomena because they are passing away every moment. So [it is said that] it "does not exist" because of the svabhāva of a thing that changes.

Since at this point on the path the Buddha's followers believe that he is all-knowing, they have complete trust in his teachings. So they are prepared to accept his teaching that what is real by convention does not exist by itself. What exists by itself is said not to come to be or pass away, since what exists by itself cannot be produced by causes and conditions, and what cannot be produced by causes and conditions cannot come to be or pass away. What is real by convention, however, changes in the sense that it comes to be and passes away moment by moment. The svabhāva of what changes is its absence of existence by itself. So at this second stage the Buddha teaches his followers that what is real by convention does not exist by itself, since it changes. Nāgārjuna's *Treatise* provides numerous examples of this form of argument.

Candrakīrti now comments on the third and fourth steps.

> Some are taught that everything [real by convention] exists and does not exist. Everything [real by convention] exists according to persons who are [like] children. But the knowledge of the Āryas[142] shows that all this is false, since it is not perceived by them.

> Some are taught that everything [real by convention] neither exists nor does not exist. They are those who see phenomena as they are after very long practice and have to some degree uprooted the remaining obstructions that are the roots of the tree [of ignorance]. In order to destroy the remaining obstructions a refutation of both is made; [it is like] the refutation of [the thesis that] the son of a barren woman is fair or dark [in complexion].

The Buddha's teaching that things real by convention both exist and do not exist is said here to be presented for those who have realized emptiness. His teaching that things real by convention exist is the teaching that they exist as conventional realities. His teaching that they do not exist is the teaching that they do not exist by their own natures. This is not a provisional teaching, since it is as a teaching true in the only way in which it could be true, which is from a conventional point of view. This second step of the teaching is rejected as the final teaching only in the sense that it does not show the way things are in the way experiencing them from an ultimate point of view shows the way things are: since from an ultimate point of view there is nothing of which it can be asserted that it exists or does not exist, it cannot be said that things do or do not exist.

The teaching that things real by convention neither do nor do not exist is the teaching the Buddha gives to his followers as they approach full awakening. This teaching expresses emptiness as experienced, since in the experience of emptiness there is no affirmation or denial of existence. The final teaching is a paradox: because things real by convention are its subject, it both presupposes their conventional reality and asserts that they neither do nor do not exist. A paradox is generated because the teaching expresses the way things are from the point of view of an experience of the way they are. The paradoxical nature of this teaching, however, does not undermine the third stage of the teaching on emptiness.

> And this is the teaching of the Bhagavāns. Having led [his followers] from a wrong path, the teaching establishes the right path. In this step-by-step manner, teaching follows teaching. In order to serve those needing guidance, teaching follows teaching.
>
> All the teachings of Bhagavāns, who are endowed with great compassion, skill in means and knowledge, are established by means of entering into the way things are. The Tathāgatas never make statements that are not a means for entering into the way things are. They present the teachings in an appropriate way out of their desire to attract those in need of guidance. It is like the giving of a medicine that fits an illness.

"View," "mistaken view," and "transient collection view"

A term whose translation creates problems of interpretation for Candrakīrti's philosophy is *dṛṣṭi* (*lta ba*),[143] since it is multiply ambiguous. *Dṛṣṭi* is based on

the verbal root, √ *dṛṣ*, which means "seeing," "viewing," or "beholding." Some translators consistently use "view" to translate this term in the belief, perhaps, that it is not ambiguous. But when *dṛṣṭi* is always translated as "view," the impression is created that it refers to a doctrine, belief, or theory of some sort, without regard to whether it is true or false, since this is the sense "view" has in English in philosophical contexts.[144] Sometimes, of course, this is that to which it refers, but not always. At different times and in different contexts Candrakīrti uses *dṛṣṭi* to refer to (i) a view that he believes to be unmistaken, (ii) a view he believes to be mistaken, or (iii) an innate mistaken viewing or seeing of something as existing by its own nature.

When I wish to call to the attention of readers a use of *dṛṣṭi* to refer either to a mistaken doctrine, belief, or theory, or to an innate mistaken viewing or seeing of something as existing by its own nature, I translate it as "mistaken view," since Candrakīrti uses it in some compounds in a way that does not distinguish between these two ways of being a mistaken view. For instance *ātmadṛṣṭi* (*bdag lta ba*), which is translated here as "the mistaken view of a self," can mean either the mistaken doctrine, belief, or theory that a self exists by its own nature or an innate mistaken viewing or seeing of a self existing in that way. When "the mistaken view of a self" has the second meaning it is synonymous with "the conception of a self," which is the root cause of the sufferings of saṃsāra.

I think that it is highly misleading to translate *dṛṣṭi* as "view" as it occurs in Candrakīrti's denial that he has a *dṛṣṭi*,[145] since I believe as Tsongkhapa does that he is actually denying that he has a mistaken doctrine, belief, or theory that anything exists by its own nature. Candrakīrti believes that he has a true view in the sense of a view that is true by convention. If this is correct Candrakīrti's denial that he has a *dṛṣṭi* is best rendered as the denial that he has "a mistaken view" so that we may avoid a misunderstanding of his philosophy. In my translation of the Commentary both "view" and "mistaken view" are used to render *lta ba*, which is the Tibetan term used in the Commentary to translate *dṛṣṭi*. Readers beware. Decide for yourself whether in any given case I have rendered the term correctly.

The expression *satkāyadṛṣṭi* (*'jig tshogs la lta ba*) has been translated into English in very different ways, ranging from the "the view of the perishable collection" to "the philosophical view of a self." As it is used in this compound *dṛṣṭi* can mean either a mistaken doctrine, belief, or theory or an inborn mistaken viewing or seeing of something. There is no need to add "mistaken" to "view" in the translation in this compound, since the idea of the view being mistaken in this is case is clear and the use of "mistaken view" would be too clumsy.

Most Sanskrit scholars seem to believe that in *satkāyadṛṣṭi*, *sat* comes from the root √ *as* in its meaning as "existing" and that *kāya* means "collection." If this interpretation of *sat* is correct the compound means something like "a mistaken view of a collection as existing" or perhaps "a mistaken view of what exists as a collection." But it is not very clear what is meant by "a mistaken view

of a collection that exists" or "a mistaken view of what exists as a collection," and I am unaware of any explanation by an Indian Buddhist philosopher in which *sat* in *satkāyadṛṣṭi* is explained in this way.

In addition to the problem of how to interpret what the compound means if *sat* in *satkāyadṛṣṭi* means "existing," there is the problem that the Tibetans translate it as *'jig*, which means "perishable," "transient," or, most accurately, "disintegrating." The Tibetan translation is perplexing, since this meaning for *sat* does not appear in any Sanskrit dictionary I consulted. It has been suggested that in the original Sanskrit, the word *sat* was *ṣat*, which was interpreted as *'jig*, and that over the course of time *sat* was substituted for *ṣat*. But most scholars do not seem to agree with this suggestion.

Yet we know that the Tibetan translators were working with Indian Buddhist scholars and that their translation is likely to have met with approval by these scholars. Unfortunately, the Indian Buddhist scholars do not, in the Sanskrit texts with which I am familiar, explain the meaning of *sat* in the compound. So what does *sat* mean as it appears in *satkāyadṛṣṭi*?

In the translation of the Commentary, with an apology to Sanskrit scholars, here I will follow the interpretation of the Tibetan scholars, since not only is the Tibetan translation being translated, but it also seems likely that the Tibetan translators knew exactly what is meant by *sat* in this compound, since they were privy to the Indian Buddhist texts and an oral tradition of scholarship.

Understood as the Tibetan translators did, *satkāya* is a reference to the collection of transient phenomena that is the causal basis of the conception of a self. Candrakīrti thinks that a collection of aggregates is transient in the sense that each of the aggregates in the collection and hence the collection dependently arises for a moment and then passes away only to dependently arise again.

If the Tibetan translation of *satkāyadṛṣṭi* rather than the Sanskrit itself is to be translated there is another complication. In *'jig tshogs la lta ba*, the connecting particle, *la*, signifies a dative relation between *'jig tshogs* and *lta ba*, not a genitive relation, which is how it is sometimes represented in English translations. It seems that the use of a dative connector rather than a genitive connector in the translation is ignored in the translation of *'jig tshogs la lta ba* because of the peculiar way in which the Tibetans interpreted the connection between the two major parts of this Sanskrit compound. On the other hand it is once again very likely that the Tibetan translators had good reason to construe the compound in this way, since they were assisted by Indian Buddhist scholars. Perhaps the best option is to follow the translators of Rendawa's commentary who use "concerning" to render *la*, in their translation of *'jig tshogs la lta ba*, which is "the view concerning a destructible collection." However, I will avoid the problem altogether by translating the compound as is, without interpreting the relation between its parts as "the transient collection view." What is important in any case is not how to translate the compound but how Candrakīrti and his opponents interpret its meaning, and there is no pressing reason to include in the translation an interpretation of the relation between these parts of the compound.

Candrakīrti interprets the transient collection view as a mistaken view that occurs in dependence upon a transient collection of aggregates. This does not mean that he thinks that the object of the transient collection view is the aggregates. This is the interpretation that he attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas. The mistaken view is the conception of a self and of things as its possession that arises in dependence upon a transient collection of the aggregates. Since a self is conceived in dependence upon a transient collection of aggregates, a self is conceived when the aggregates are present, and since, when a self is conceived, it is conceived as existing by its own nature, the mistaken view of a self occurs when a transient collection of aggregates is present.

In C120 Candrakīrti says that the transient collection view is an affliction of wisdom that takes the form of thinking of a self and of things as its possessions. The "wisdom" (*shes rab*, *prajñā*) that is afflicted is most likely the mental factor that enables the mind, through the use of analysis or argument, to apprehend objects without superimposing upon them properties they do not possess. For instance, one sort of wisdom is the wisdom that enables the mind to apprehend objects without superimposing upon them the conception of being permanent when in fact they are not. The highest wisdom is the wisdom that enables the mind to apprehend objects without superimposing upon them the conception of existence by themselves. When Candrakīrti says that the affliction of wisdom takes the form of thinking of a self and of things as its possessions, he means that the thinking of a self and of things as its possessions superimposes the conception of unqualified existence upon what is thought.

Part IV: On Candrakīrti's theory of persons in relation to other Indian Buddhist theories

We are now in a position to explain Candrakīrti's theory of persons in relation to other Indian Buddhist theories. Since I assume that he believes that the theses he attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas are those of Vasubandhu in the "Refutation," and that the theses he attributes to the Āryasāṃmitīyas are those of the Pudgalavādins, I will refer to their theses as those of Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins. In what follows, a reference to a self is either a reference (i) to a person-property self, (ii) to a self without person-properties, (iii) to a self that is either a person-property self or a self without person-properties, or (iv) generically simply to a self.

There are eight theses that constitute the Buddhist theory of persons in the statements of which reference to a self is generic. The first thesis is *the conceptual dependency thesis*, that a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates; the second is *the conventional reality thesis*, that a self is a conventional reality; the third thesis is *the non-otherness thesis*, that a self other than the aggregates does not exist at all; the fourth is *the conception thesis*, that the conception of a self is the conception of a self that exists by itself; the fifth thesis is *the no-self thesis*, that a self does not exist by itself; the sixth is *the cause of suffering thesis*, that the conception of a self is the cause of our suffering in

saṃsāra; the seventh thesis is *the wisdom thesis*, that what frees us from suffering in saṃsāra is the wisdom that is the full realization that a self does not exist by itself; and the eighth is *the qualified existence thesis*, that the Buddha not unqualifiedly denying the existence of a self implies that a self exists in a qualified way.[146] These theses are amenable to different interpretations and are differently interpreted by Vasubandhu, the Pudgalavādins, and Candrakīrti, whose arguments against the interpretations of the others are also parts of their theories of persons.

The conceptual dependency thesis

Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins assume that a person-property self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. Candrakīrti thinks that there is a self without person-properties that is also conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. He believes that a person-property self comes to be in dependence upon a self that acquires the aggregates, since when the aggregates are acquired a self comes to be that possesses person-properties. Since Candrakīrti identifies the self that is without person-properties with what acquires the aggregates, he thinks that it is conceived, as a person-property self is, in dependence on the aggregates.

The conventional reality thesis

Vasubandhu, the Pudgalavādins, and Candrakīrti think that a person-property self is a conventional reality. Vasubandhu thinks that a person-property self is a conventional reality because analysis shows that it ceases to be conceived when analyzed into the aggregates in dependence upon which it is conceived. The Pudgalavādins most likely also believe, for the same reason, that a person-property self is a conventional reality. The Pudgalavādins do not believe that Vasubandhu can say that a person-property self is a conventional reality, since he identifies a self without person-properties with the aggregates, and there is no way in which the aggregates can be a subject of person-properties. Candrakīrti may think that both a person-property self and a self without person-properties are conventional realities, since a self without person-properties is also by convention conceived in dependence upon the aggregates because it is what acquires the aggregates. A conventional reality, according to Candrakīrti, is a dependently conceived object of conception whose existence is assumed when it is not being analyzed to determine whether or not it exists by itself.

The non-otherness thesis

The non-otherness thesis[147] is that a self other than the aggregates does not exist. This thesis is accepted as true in all Indian Buddhist philosophical schools because a self other than the aggregates cannot come to be, pass away, or

change, which are properties possessed by a self. When it is denied that a self other than the aggregates exists the meaning is that it exists neither by itself nor by convention. According to Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins, the denial that a self is other than the aggregates is the denial that it exists apart from the aggregates as a separate substance. Candrakīrti denies that there is a self that is other than the aggregates not only because he denies that it is a separate substance, but also because he believes that a self and the aggregates are conceived in dependence upon each other.

The conception thesis

Vasubandhu and Pudgalavādins accept the thesis that the conception of a self is the conception of a person-property self as existing by itself, since they believe, as other Indian Buddhist philosophers do, that the person-property self is a conventional reality and that it is a conventional reality that the Buddha said is falsely conceived as existing by itself. Candrakīrti seems to think that there are two conceptions of a self. There is the conception of a person-property self and the conception of a self that does not possess person-properties because it acquires the aggregates in dependence upon which a person-property self comes to be. However, analysis shows that neither self exists by itself, since the first exists in dependence upon the second, which exists in dependence upon being an acquirer of the aggregates.

Candrakīrti, Vasubandhu, and the Pudgalavādins all seem to believe that a person-property self is conceived as existing by itself because it appears to exist by itself when conceived. Candrakīrti thinks that Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins fail to realize that a self without person-properties is the self that acquires the aggregates and appears to exist by itself.

The no-self thesis

There are basically three different Indian Buddhist versions of the no-self thesis.[148] The first, which is accepted in all Indian Buddhist philosophical schools, is the non-otherness thesis. It is the denial that a self exists as something other than the aggregates. A second interpretation of the no-self thesis accepted in all Indian Buddhist schools is that a person-property self does not exist by itself. It is denied that a person-property self exists by itself because when we look for it in the causal basis of its conception, it is not found. Although Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins deny that a person-property self exists by itself, they assert the independent existence of a self that lacks person-properties.[149] The third interpretation of the no-self thesis is that which is accepted by Candrakīrti. It is the denial of the independent existence of a self that is without person-properties. Because this self does not exist by itself, he believes, a person-property self does not exist by itself. Neither Vasubandhu nor the Pudgalavādins explicitly deny the independent existence of a self without

person-properties. Vasubandhu thinks that because the aggregates are the causal basis of the conception of a person-property self, the aggregates are a self without its person-properties. Though by convention a self is a person-property self, Vasubandhu thinks that the self to which we actually refer when we think we are referring to a person-property self is a collection of aggregates. So for Vasubandhu the actual object of a conception is whatever is found to be the causal basis of the conception. The Pudgalavādins believe, by contrast, that the object of the conception of a self is not the same as the aggregates that are the causal basis of its conception and that an object of the conception of a self is found that exists by itself and is neither other than nor the same as its causal basis. According to Candrakīrti, the lack of independent existence of the object to which we refer when we use the first-person singular pronoun to refer is the most profound form of the no-self thesis.

The cause of suffering thesis

According to Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins, the conception of a person-property self is the cause of our suffering in saṃsāra. According to Candrakīrti, the conception of a self that acquires the aggregates is the cause of our suffering in saṃsāra. All agree that the conception of a self that is other than aggregates is not the cause of our suffering in saṃsāra.

The wisdom thesis

Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins think that what frees us from suffering in saṃsāra is the wisdom that is the realization that a person-property self does not exist by itself. According to Candrakīrti, it is the realization that a self that acquires the aggregates does not exist by itself. Candrakīrti does not think that the realization that a person-property self does not exist by itself frees us from suffering unless it is based on the realization that a self that acquires aggregates does not exist by itself. He assumes that the realization that something does not exist by itself requires that the mind properly identify the object whose independent existence is to be negated. In meditation the mind is held upon the object whose existence is to be negated and looks for this object among the phenomena in dependence upon which it is conceived; and when the mind is able, simultaneously and continuously, to hold before the mind the conception of the object and conceive the absence of the object in the causal basis of its conception, the object eventually ceases to appear before the mind and only its absence remains. This is the direct realization of emptiness.

The qualified existence thesis

Since the Buddha did not unqualifiedly deny the existence of a person-property self, Vasubandhu, the Pudgalavādins, and Candrakīrti need to explain in what its

qualified existence consists. Vasubandhu believes that its qualified existence consists in the independent existence of a self without person-properties. The Pudgalavādins believe that its qualified existence consists in the independent existence of a self without any properties at all because it is inexplicable in the sense that it is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates. Candrakīrti believes that the qualified existence of a person-property self consists in its existence in dependence upon the aggregates.

It is in order to explain the qualified existence thesis of the Buddha's theory of persons that Vasubandhu asserts the sameness thesis.[150] It is in order to explain the qualified existence thesis that the Pudgalavādins assert the inexplicability thesis. The Pudgalavādins reject Vasubandhu's account of the qualified existence thesis because they believe that the aggregates cannot, as an inexplicable self can, be conceived as a possessor of the aggregates. Therefore they believe that since Vasubandhu cannot explain the qualified existence of a person-property self, he is wrong to identify a self without person-properties with the aggregates. Vasubandhu rejects the Pudgalavādins' account of the qualified existence thesis because he believes that if a self without person-properties is not the same as the aggregates, it must be other than the aggregates. The Pudgalavādins reject Vasubandhu's objection to their inexplicability thesis because they think that it is based on his misrepresentation of the thesis and his mistaken interpretation of the Buddha's doctrine of the two realities.[151]

Candrakīrti rejects the interpretations of the qualified existence thesis presented both by Vasubandhu and by the Pudgalavādins because of their unacceptable consequences. He thinks that the sameness thesis and inexplicability thesis are shown to be false by the arguments he presents in the Commentary. Since Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins think that reference to a self must be to a self that exists by itself, they would reject Candrakīrti's interpretation of the qualified existence thesis because they think that it implies that a person-property self does not exist at all. They would say that if a self without person-properties exists only in dependence upon the aggregates, there would be nothing at all to which the conception of a person-property self actually refers. They would say that Candrakīrti's interpretation of the qualified existence thesis rests on his misinterpretation of the Buddha's no-self thesis as the thesis that a self without person-properties does not exist by itself. For this reason in the Commentary Candrakīrti argues for his own interpretation of the no-self thesis and against theirs on the basis of reasoning and scripture.

The Pudgalavādins and Candrakīrti deny that a self without person-properties is either other than or the same as the aggregates. But unlike Candrakīrti the Pudgalavādins believe that a self without person-properties exists by itself without being either other than or the same as the aggregates. Although he does not do so in the Commentary, Candrakīrti surely rejects, as Vasubandhu does in the "Refutation,"[152] the Pudgalavādins' claim to know that an inexplicable self exists by itself because it is perceived when the aggregates associated with it are present.

2

TRANSLATION

Correct reasoning and scripture have been employed above to explain the selflessness of phenomena. In what follows, an explanation of the selflessness of persons is presented.

Verse 120

When a meditator realizes that all mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra]
without exception arise because of the transient collection view[1]
and has understood that a self is the object of this [view]
he composes a refutation of its existence.[2]

The transient collection view is an affliction of wisdom that takes the form of the thinking of a self and its possessions. What arise from this view are said to arise because of the transient collection view. What arise are the mental afflictions such as desire, and [the] faults [of saṃsāra] such as birth, old age, sickness, death, and grieving. All of these arise because of the transient collection view. It is said in a sūtra that all mental afflictions are caused by the transient collection view:

All of these [mental afflictions and the faults of saṃsāra] have their root in, are caused by, and arise completely from, the transient collection view.

Because the aggregates[3] and the sufferings such as birth arise for those who have not eliminated the transient collection view, the transient collection view is their cause. The object of that [view] is just a self, since the conception of a self[4] is what has a self as its object.[5] Hence one who wants to eliminate completely the mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra] needs to abandon this very transient collection view.[6] Since this is done by realizing the selflessness of a self, a meditator employs a refutation of the existence of a self.[7] When this refutation destroys the transient collection view, all mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra] are abandoned. Therefore, it becomes clear that an analysis of a self is

the means by which freedom is achieved. So in the beginning a meditator should analyze a self and ask what this "self" is that is the object of the transient collection view.[8]

Should one who is without knowledge of this self ask what this self is that is the object of the transient collection view,[9] it is said:

Verse 121[10]

> ***There are Tīrthikas who have supposed that a self is an enjoyer [of objects],***
> ***permanent, and without agency, constituents or motion.***
> ***In dependence upon slight variations of this [theory],***
> ***Tīrthikas have developed different systems of thought.***[11]

The Sāṃkhyas have said [in *Sāṃkhya Verses* 3],

> *The foundational nature*[12] *is not a thing produced.*
> *The seven, the great one*[13] *and the others, are producers and things produced.*
> *The sixteen are just things produced.*
> *A self*[14] *is neither a producer nor a thing produced.*

The foundational nature is so-called because it is an unqualified producer. It produces when it becomes aware of a desire of a self. When a self has a desire to enjoy objects such as sounds, the foundational nature recognizes a self's desire and approaches it. Then it produces objects such as sounds. The way in which this happens is that from the foundational nature the great one arises, from which in turn the ego[15] arises. And from the ego the collection of sixteen arises. And from five of these sixteen, which are the objects of the senses,[16] the five elements arise. This is the order [in which they arise].

The expression, "is not a thing produced" is applied [to the foundational nature] because it is just a producer. It is not like the great one and the others insofar it is not also a thing produced. The great one and the others are both producers and things produced.

So it is said, "The seven, the great one and the others, are producers and things produced." In relation to what they produce the great one and the others are producers, while in relation to the foundational nature they are things produced. The sixteen, which include the organs of perception and the others, are only things produced.

So it is said, "The sixteen are just things produced." The word "just" has the meaning of making it definite that they are only things produced.[17]

To show that a self does not produce and is not a thing produced it is said that "A self is neither a producer nor a thing produced." This is the order in which all phenomena that arise [from the foundational nature] are produced.

In what way a self that has desire [to enjoy objects] is their enjoyer will [now] be explained. The sense-organs,[18] activated by the mental organ,[19] apprehend the objects of sense,[20] which are then apprehended by the intellect.[21] Then a self is aware of the object that is apprehended by the intellect. Consequently, because awareness is the svabhāva of a self,[22] it seems that a self should enjoy objects. Objects are enjoyed in this way because of desire.

As attachment is weakened, a self [gradually] loses its attachment to objects and then over time by the practice of the absorptions and the acquisition of sublime knowledge it perceives the foundational nature with the divine eye. The foundational nature becomes embarrassed when it is seen in the way the wife of another man does[23] and without anger it disengages from the self. All things produced return into the foundational nature and disappear in a reverse order from that in which they arose. A self then stands alone and so obtains freedom.

A self is said [in the verse] to be "permanent" because by nature it always remains apart [from everything else] and does not disappear even though the things produced have disappeared. It is said to be "without agency" because both the foundational nature and some of the phenomena it produces produce, but a self is unrelated to [productive] action.[24] The way in which a self is an enjoyer has already been explained. A self is said to be "without constituents" because it is without the natures of passion, darkness, or goodness.[25] A self is said to be "without motion" because it pervades [everything in space].[26] These are the properties of a self.

When it was stated that the foundational nature and some of the phenomena that arise because of it produce, it was not explained which phenomena are producers and which are not. So the following brief account is given in explanation of this statement. Passion, darkness, and goodness are the three constituents [of the foundational nature]. The nature of passion is vacillation and excitement. Darkness is heaviness and its nature is to obscure. Goodness is lightness and its nature is to illuminate. They are also characterized as "suffering," "delusion," and "happiness."[27] The balanced state of these is the ultimate foundation,[28] since in that state the constituents are the ultimate foundation and are at rest. The foundational nature is these [constituents] not being in a developed state. From the foundational nature the great one arises. The great one is also called the intellect.

From the great [intellect] the ego arises. The ego is of three types: that in which passion is dominant, that in which goodness is dominant, and that in which darkness is dominant.[29] From the ego in which passion is dominant the five subtle elements arise.[30] They are visible form, sound, odor, flavor, and tactile qualities. The five elements that are coarse are earth, water, fire, air, and space. They arise because of these five subtle elements. From the ego in which goodness is dominant arise [i] the five organs of motion, which are speech, hands, feet, anus, and generative organ, [ii] the five organs of perception, which are the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and skin, and [iii] the mental organ that is of the nature of both [kinds of] organs.[31] The ego in which darkness is dominant sets in motion the other two [kinds of ego].[32] The great [intellect], the ego and the five subtle

elements are both producers and things produced, but the ten organs, the mental organ, and the five coarse elements are just things produced. The foundational nature is said not to be a thing produced. This is the theory of the Sāṃkhyas.

Just as the Sāṃkhyas accepted the theory of a self, in the same way "in dependence upon slight variations of this [theory]," the different theories of the Tīrthikas are developed. The Vaiśeṣikas say that a self has nine properties: cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, anger, effort, virtue, vice, and a dispositional tendency caused by mental activity. Cognition is apprehension of an object. Pleasure is enjoyment of an object desired, and pain is its contrary. Desire is attachment to each thing for which there is a desire. Anger is aversion to an undesirable object. Effort is power of the mind to persist in the attainment of a goal. Virtue is what creates high status [in saṃsāra] and definite goodness.[33] Vice is its contrary. Arising from cognition and the cause of cognition is the force of their union.

One remains in saṃsāra as long as these nine properties of a self exist in a self, since it performs virtuous and nonvirtuous actions when in union with them. But when through right knowledge the properties of a self[34] are cut off at their root, one abides in his own nature and obtains freedom. They also say that a self is permanent, an agent of action, an enjoyer [of the result of action], a possessor of properties, and because it pervades [everything], it is without motion. The theory that it performs actions by contracting and expanding is accepted by some.

The followers of the Vedas[35] accept the theory that one [self] is many by reason of the difference between bodies, just as space [is many when distinguished according to the space] in things such as a pot. So in dependence upon slight differences in [their accounts of] a self the Tīrthikas have developed different systems of thought.

About a self that is thought to exist according to the different Tīrthikas' systems of thought we say that

Verse 122

Because it does not exist,
like a barren woman's child, it does not exist.
Neither could it be the support[36] ***of the conception of a self.***
That it exists by convention is also not accepted.[37]

Because it is inconsistent with their own deliberations, the self mentioned above does not exist. Because it does not come to be, it is like a barren woman's child. Nor can it be the object of the conception of a self, since it does not come to be. It is false that it exists and that it is the object of the conception of a self,[38] not only [when seen] from an ultimate point of view, but also [when seen] from a conventional point of view.[39]

It is false not only that it exists and that it is the support of the conception of a self, but in addition,

Verse 123

Since their own reasoning [to the conclusion]
that it does not come to be undermines
all of the arguments used by the Tīrthikas in their different śāstras
to establish the properties of that [self], these properties do not exist.

In the Sāṃkhyas' śāstras it is accepted that the properties of being permanent, being without agency, being an enjoyer, and being without constituents or motion belong to a self. But the self [in question] is not permanent, not an agent, not an enjoyer, and has no constituents or motion, since, like a barren woman's child, it does not come to be. Similarly, the self the Vaiśeṣikas claim to exist is also not permanent, is not an agent, and so forth, as stated in their śāstras, since it does not come to be. In this way, everything said about the self [as they define it], about both its svabhāva[40] and its properties, should be considered as refuted by the demonstration [that it does not exist because] of not coming to be and the example of a barren woman's child.

Accordingly, we conclude,

Verse 124a

So a self other than the aggregates does not exist.

A self that is other than the aggregates does not exist because a self that exists apart from them cannot be conceived. If a self were to be other than the aggregates, one should be able to show that it is separately conceived. Since this cannot be done, a self that is other than the aggregates does not exist,

Verse 124b

for a self is not conceived unless the aggregates are present.

It is said [in *Treatise* 27.7],

Certainly no self is found that is other than what it acquires.
If it were other, it would be conceived
without reference to what is acquired,
but it is not [so] conceived.[41]

It is also said [in *Treatise* 18.1cd],

If it were other than the aggregates,
it would be without the defining properties of the aggregates.

Not only does a self other than the aggregates not exist, in addition:

Verse 124cd

We do not say that in the world it is the support of mind conceiving a self,
since the mistaken view of a self occurs without knowledge of that [self].

Even those who do not apprehend this sort of a self conceive a self when they speak of a self and of things possessed by a self[42] because of attachment. So it cannot be argued that a self that is the support of the conception of a self is other than the aggregates.

It might be thought,

> Although someone may not now know that a self has properties such as those of being permanent and not coming to be, he too will possess, under the influence of previous habituation, a conception of a self whose object is that [self].

But this too is not so, since only those who have studied the śāstras in which it is taught accept a self [of this sort]. Moreover, it is clear that those who are without [the influence of] such previous habituation still conceive a self.

With respect to this theory, therefore,

Verse 125

Those who have also been animals for many eons do not see this [self],
which is permanent and does not come to be.
But they are observed to embrace the conception of a self.
So a self not other than the aggregates does not exist.

Even sentient beings who have not for many eons been able to reverse the process of coming to be as animals do not apprehend a self of such a sort. The expression "also" [in 125a] is meant to include beings that come to be in realms such as the hells. Once it has been seen that those who apprehend a self do not apprehend a self of such a sort, how can anyone with wisdom see [such a] self to be the support of the conception of a self? Therefore, a self other than the aggregates does not exist.

On this subject, some of our fellow Buddhists have said,

Verse 126ab

"Because a self other than aggregates does not exist,[43]
the object of the mistaken view of a self[44] ***is the aggregates themselves."***[45]

It follows from the reasoning already presented that a self other than the aggregates does not exist. Since a self other than the aggregates does not exist, only the aggregates are the object of the transient collection view. Therefore, it is said that a self is just the aggregates themselves. This is a thesis held by our fellow Buddhists, the Sāṃmitīyas.

Verse 126cd

Some assert that all five aggregates are the support of the mistaken view of a self[46]
and others assert that it is mind alone.

Some [Sāṃmitīyas] assert that all five of the aggregates are the object of the transient collection view. These are bodily forms, feeling, discrimination, motivating dispositions, and consciousness. They say that

> attachment to a self pertains to that [all five aggregates], since the Bhagavān said
>
> > *Monks, all Śramaṇas*[47] *and Brāhmins who correctly understand the thought of a self understand that it pertains only to the five acquired aggregates.*[48]
>
> Therefore, in order to make it clear to them [the monks] that this view of theirs [the Śramaṇas and Brāhmins] pertains to a collection whose nature is to be transient rather than to a self and its possessions it was said [by the Buddha] that "the view that assumes the form of a self and its possessions is the transient collection view."

Others assert that mind is a self because of the verse [in the *Udānavarga*[49] 23.14] in which it is said,

> *A self is its own protector.*
> *What other protector could there be?*
> *By properly controlling the self*
> *the wise attain high status.*

They conclude that "self" refers only to mind. They think that this follows because a self that is other than the aggregates does not exist and because in other sūtras it is stated that mind is what is to be controlled. [For instance, it is said in the *Udānavarga* 31.1cd,]

> *To control the mind is [an] excellent [practice].*
> *A mind controlled brings happiness.*

Therefore, "self," which is the support of the conception of a self, is applied to mind.

To this thesis the reply is made,

Verse 127

If the aggregates are a self, it follows that
because they are many, a self too would become many.
A self would be a substance and because it would be regarded as a substance[50]
the view of it [as a substance] would not be mistaken.[51]

It follows from the thesis that the aggregates are a self that a self must be many, since the aggregates are many. It also follows from the thesis that mind is a self that a self is many, since mind is many insofar as there are various kinds of consciousnesses such as the eye consciousness,[52] and insofar as mind comes to be and passes away from moment to moment. Alternatively the error may be explained as it applies in each case. This error is attributed to those who assert that the aggregates are a self and to those who assert that mind is a self. In what follows the errors attributed to the former claim may also be attributed, *mutatis mutandis*, to the latter.

Since in a sūtra [*Anguttara Nikāya* 1.22] it is said,

When a person comes to be, he comes to be as one,

the thesis that a self is many cannot be held.

It would also follow that a self would be a substance, since the term "aggregates" is applied only to temporally distinct substances such as bodily forms, and it is only to them that a self is referred. But it cannot be said that a self is substantially real,[53] since in a sūtra it is said,

Monks, there are five things that are mere names, mere terms or mere conceptions, namely, past, future, space, nirvāṇa and person.

It is also said,

Just as something is said to be a chariot
in dependence upon a collection of parts,
so someone is by convention said to be
a sentient being in dependence upon the aggregates.

Therefore, the thesis that the aggregates are a self has the consequence that a self is substantially real. So the aggregates are not a self.

Again, the transient collection view would not be an error if it should have a substance as its object in the way that the consciousnesses of the different

colors[54] have substances as their objects. If this were so either the transient collection view could not be eliminated by having freed oneself from the cause of suffering or it could be eliminated simply by freeing oneself from attachment to it as its object as the eye consciousness [is freed from attachment] to the different colors.

In addition,

Verse 128

When nirvāṇa is obtained, a self would certainly pass away.
During the moments prior to obtaining nirvāṇa it would come to be and pass away.
Since the agent of action does not exist, neither would the result of its action.
[The result of] what is done by one would be experienced by another.

If a self possesses the svabhāva of the aggregates,[55] it would pass away when nirvāṇa is obtained,[56] since at that time the five aggregates pass away. On this basis, since what is held is [a belief in the] total destruction [of a self], there is the consequence that an extreme view is maintained. Since the extreme [view] of [the] total destruction [of a self] is held, there is the consequence that an extreme view is held. An extreme view is held because it is thought that there is an extreme view when the object of the transient collection view, in the form of a self and its possessions, is apprehended either as permanent or as totally destroyed. So it should not be held that when nirvāṇa is obtained a self passes away, since it gives rise to an extreme view. Therefore, a self does not possess the svabhāva[57] of the aggregates.

Since the aggregates come to be and pass away moment by moment, a self also would come to be and pass away [moment by moment] before nirvāṇa is obtained; for [according to you] it possesses the svabhāva possessed by the aggregates. Therefore, just as one would not then say that my present body existed in such and such a past life, so the Bhagavān would not have said,

I was called king Mandhatar at the time that happened.

For on your theory, since a self that existed at that time would like the body have been destroyed, and a completely different being would have come to be. And so in the *Treatise* [27.6] it is said,

What is acquired is certainly not a self;
for that comes to be and passes away.
How indeed will what is acquired
become what acquires it?

Again [in *Treatise* 18.1ab, it is said],

> *If the aggregates were a self,*
> *a self would come to be and pass away.*

Moreover, if a self were to come to be and pass away, the result [of an action] would not exist, since the agent of an action, i.e. a self, would not exist. For if what performs an action were impermanent, the [result of the] action would pass away when its agent passes away, since it exists in dependence upon its agent. Therefore, an agent of action would no longer be connected to its result.

If the result of an action performed at an earlier moment is experienced at a later moment, then since the result of an action accumulated by one person would be experienced by another, the [result of an] action accumulated by one person would be experienced by another. The consequences are that the result of an action one performs does not have to be experienced [by him] and that the result of an action [he has] not performed can be experienced [by him]. In the *Treatise* [27.10–11, it is said],

> *If this [present self] were other [than a past self],*
> *even though [the existence of] that [past self] is denied, it would exist.*
> *If this were so,*
> *it would be born without having died.*
> *[The karmic results of] actions would be totally destroyed or annihilated.*
> *[The karmic results of] actions performed by one [self]*
> *would be enjoyed by another.*
> *There would be such consequences and more.*

Hence, it cannot be argued that the aggregates are a self.

If it is said that there is no error here, since, even though these [selves] occur at different times and so are other than one another, they occur as parts of the same [causal] continuum, it is replied,

Verse 129ab

> ***"There is no error if they exist in a [causal] continuum."***[58]
> ***But the mistake of a [causal] continuum was explained by an earlier analysis.***

This analysis has already been set out [in *Introduction* 6.61], where it was said,

> *The phenomena associated with Maitri or with Upagupta cannot*
> *form a single continuum, since their aggregates are other than one another.*
> *It cannot be argued that things other than one another*
> *according to their defining properties form a single continuum.*[59]

It is also said [in *Treatise* 27.16],

If a human being were other than a god,
it would not be permanent.
If a human being were other than a god,
a continuum would not arise.

Therefore, since things whose defining properties are other than one another cannot belong to a single [causal] continuum, the consequence is not avoided.

So in order to show that neither the aggregates nor minds are a self it is said,

Verse 129c

So [for these reasons] it cannot be argued that the aggregates or minds are a self.

The consequences just drawn show that it is false that the aggregates or minds are a self.

The next verse draws another consequence:

Verse 129d

[and] because the world of sentient beings does not have an end, and so forth.

It cannot be argued that the aggregates or minds are a self, since the theories that there is a world of sentient beings that has an end, does not have an end, both does and does not have an end, or neither does not does not have an end,[60] were rejected [by the Buddha]. Fourteen questions not answered in the scriptures are discussed in all the schools. They concern the world of sentient beings being either permanent, impermanent, both permanent and impermanent, or neither permanent nor impermanent, [and so on]. Because the Bhagavān said that these questions are not to be answered, they are in the scriptures called the rejected questions. They are rejected in this way. It is even stated in the sūtras of the Pūrvaśaila School that if a monk were to accept the theory that the world of sentient beings is permanent, he is to be shunned:

He who accepts the theory that the world of sentient beings is either permanent, impermanent, both permanent and impermanent, or neither permanent nor impermanent is to be expelled from the order.[61]

This statement is made, *mutatis mutandis*, concerning the fourteen things not explained in the scriptures. So if "world of sentient beings" is understood to

mean "aggregates" [as it is by you], then since aggregates are impermanent (because they come to be and pass away), the world of sentient beings would have in scripture been said to be impermanent. Since for that reason aggregates pass away when nirvāṇa is obtained, it would also follow that the world of sentient beings would have in scripture been said to have an end. Similarly, it would also have been said that a Tathāgata[62] would not exist after he dies. Therefore, since it was rejected [in this way] that the world of sentient beings has an end, does not have an end, both or neither, it cannot be argued that the aggregates alone are a self.

In addition,

Verse 130

> ***According to your theory, when a meditator sees selflessness***
> ***he must be seeing that things do not exist.***
> ***If at that time [you say that] a permanent self is abandoned,***
> ***then your thesis is that neither the aggregates nor minds are a self*.**

If the aggregates or minds are a self and at the time a meditator sees reality he sees the reality of suffering in its aspect of being selfless, i.e. all phenomena being without a self, then seeing selflessness will be seeing that the aggregates do not exist.[63] This thesis is not accepted [by you]. Therefore, the aggregates are not a self.

You might say that when the connection between actions and their results is being discussed, the word "self" applies to the aggregates, since no other self is possible; but when selflessness is being discussed, it applies to what others[64] imagine to be a [permanent] inner agent. Therefore, [in this theory] when one sees selflessness, one sees just the aggregates[65] without [seeing] a [permanent] inner agent.

However, if you think that seeing that things do not exist is not a consequence [of the thesis that aggregates are a self], since [only conceiving] a permanent self is abandoned, then for you neither the aggregates nor minds are a self. If out of fear of the consequence that things do not exist, you accept the thesis that "self" applies to a permanent self, you no longer accept the thesis that the aggregates or minds are a self.[66] Therefore, you have undermined the thesis you previously held.

Again, you might say that [in this case] the word "self" does not refer to an object of that sort [i.e. a self the same as the aggregates], and conclude that there is no error [in using "self" to refer to a permanent agent present within the aggregates]. But you cannot argue this, since on what basis do you make the false and arbitrary assertion that in this instance a [permanent] agent within [the aggregates] is a self and everywhere else that the aggregates are a self? If you say that it is impossible [for the word "self" to refer to aggregates] when the seeing of selflessness is in question, we reply that it has already been shown that it is

impossible for this word to refer to aggregates. Therefore, if you do not accept the thesis that the word "self" refers to aggregates when it is said that all phenomena are selfless, then you should also not accept the thesis that it refers [to aggregates] elsewhere. However, if you accept the thesis that it refers to the aggregates elsewhere, then you must accept the thesis that it does so here as well.

In addition,

Verse 131

According to you, when a meditator sees selflessness,
the way the aggregates are is not realized.
Because the aggregates are apprehended, mental afflictions[67]
will arise, since there has been no realization of their svabhāva.[68]

If one has not tasted the sweetness of a kiñjalka flower, he will not perceive its sweetness by saying that there is a cuckoo bird on the kiñjalka flower. But if one has tasted its sweetness, he does not abandon strong attachment to the flower [that arises from tasting its sweetness] by saying that there is no cuckoo bird on the kiñjalka flower. In the same way, if a meditator were to see that the aggregates[69] do not possess a permanent self, without completely knowing their svabhāva,[70] what has been accomplished?

If the aggregates[71] are apprehended as things in themselves, how does the realization of selflessness enable one to abandon the mental afflictions[72] that arise in dependence upon them? How could one abandon the mental afflictions[73] associated with them by knowing that this [permanent self] does not exist? One does not seek what is pleasant with the thought that it is for the pleasure of a [permanent] agent that resides within [the aggregates], nor does one avoid what is undesirable because he fears that this [permanent] self would suffer.

Therefore, since they will arise when the aggregates[74] are apprehended, mental afflictions[75] will still arise. And because the profound knowledge that these phenomena are not things in themselves does not cause the abandonment of mental afflictions,[76] this theory is like that of the Tīrthikas.

You might suppose that for those among us who accept the scriptures as a means to knowledge, but are unimpressed with the use of argument as a means to knowledge, the sūtras [are sufficient to] reveal that the mere aggregates are a self. Such might be said about the passage,

> *Monks, all Śramaṇas and Brāhmins who correctly understand the thought of a self understand that it pertains only to the five acquired aggregates.*

About one who would accept this thesis, it is said,

Verse 132

If you say that the aggregates are a self
because the Master said that they are a self,
[we reply that] he said so to deny that a self is other than the aggregates,
since in other sūtras he said that the aggregates are not a self.

This passage in the sūtra is used to support the thesis that the aggregates are a self, but it does not clearly assert that the aggregates are a self. What, then, does it mean? What the Bhagavān meant when he said this [that the thought of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates] is that a self other than the aggregates does not exist at all. He was refuting, in reliance upon [a self being] a conventional reality, [the theory of a self found in] the śāstras of the Tīrthikas. He did so in order to set out a clear and unmistaken account of [a self as] a conventional reality. If you ask how it is determined that he was denying that a self other than the aggregates exists, we can point out that in other sūtras he presented refutations of the thesis that the aggregates are a self.

How did he deny it?

Verse 133

In other sūtras he said that neither bodily forms,
feeling, discrimination, motivating dispositions,
nor consciousness are a self.
In brief, he did not mean that the aggregates are a self.

Therefore, it may be concluded that when in the scripture in which it is said,

> *Monks, all Śramaṇas and Brāhmins who correctly understand the thought of a self understand that it pertains only to the five acquired aggregates.*[77]

the denial of the existence of a self that is other than aggregates is intended.

It should be known that the passage in which the aggregates[78] being a self is rejected occurs in a sūtra in which it is rejected that a dependently conceived self, which is the object of the transient collection view, is a possessor of the acquired aggregates [that exists],[79] since there [in that sūtra] the realization of the way things are is being discussed. Therefore, it is proper that one would become free of attachment to the aggregates. The basis for this is that if what acquires something cannot be perceived,[80] what is acquired cannot be said to exist.[81]

Since these things are said in other sūtras, it is also said,

> ***In brief, he did not mean that the aggregates are a self.***

Moreover, even if what is taught in this scripture[82] could be understood as an assertion [of the thesis, that the aggregates are a self], it could not be shown to be the thesis that the aggregates are a self. Why?

Verse 134ab

> ***When it is said that the aggregates are a self what is meant***
> ***is a collection of aggregates, not the aggregates themselves.***

For instance, according to the statement that trees are a forest, it is a collection of trees that is [stated to be] a forest, not trees themselves,[83] since the consequence would be that each of the trees is a forest. The svabhāva[84] of a tree is not [to be] a forest. Similarly, a collection of aggregates is a self.

Therefore, since a collection does not exist, it is said [of a collection] that

Verse 134cd

> ***It is not a protector, controller, or witness.***
> ***A collection [of aggregates] is not a self, since it does not exist.***

As the Bhagavān said,

> *A self is the protector of itself.*
> *A self is the enemy of itself.*
> *A self is its own witness*
> *when it performs good or bad actions.*

In this passage it is said [of a self] that it is a protector and a witness. It was also said [in *Udānavarga* 23.14cd],

> *By properly controlling a self*
> *the wise will obtain high status.*

In this passage it is implied to be a controller. Since it cannot be argued that a mere collection, which is not substantially real,[85] is a protector, controller, or witness, a collection [of aggregates] is not a self.

You might think that since a collection is not other than the possessor of the collection, the properties[86] [of being a protector, controller, and witness] will be understood to belong to the possessor [of the collection]; and so you might say that the collection is a protector, controller, and witness. However, this too cannot be so, since the fault in this thesis has just been explained.[87]

In addition

Verse 135ab

In that case, the collection of the parts of a chariot
would be the chariot itself. The chariot and a self are similar in this respect.

In a sūtra it is said,

O thought of Māra, called "self,"
you are a mistaken view.[88]
The causally conditioning aggregate is empty.[89]
In it no being exists.
Just as in dependence upon a collection of parts,
a chariot is apprehended by means of discourse,[90]
in the same way, in dependence upon the aggregates,
a sentient being is by convention apprehended by means of discourse.

Therefore,

Verse 135cd

Since in a sūtra it is said that a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates,[91]
a mere collection[92] ***of the aggregates is not a self.***

What is conceived in dependence upon something [else] is not a mere collection of the parts that cause it to be conceived, since it is dependently conceived in the way that things are conceived because of their primary elements. Just as sense-objects[93] and sense-organs[94] are indeed conceived in dependence upon the primary elements that are their causes [of being conceived], but are not just these elements collected together, so a self, whose svabhāva[95] it is to be conceived on the basis of the [collection of] aggregates that cause it [to be conceived], should not be considered to be a mere collection of aggregates.

Suppose one says that it is surely not true of pots and other such things[96] [that they are not collections of their elements]. But that is not so, since it has not been shown that pots and other such things are mere collections of their elements.[97] The controversy and the inquiry [about a self and conventionally real objects] are similar.[98]

"Perhaps a mere collection of parts[99] is not a chariot, but when the parts [of a chariot] assume a special configuration, this configuration is called a chariot. In the same way a configuration assumed by the aggregates may be a self." However, that is not so, since

Verse 136abc

If it is said to be a configuration,
then because a configuration is possessed by bodily forms,[100]
these [bodily forms with this configuration are what] you would call a self,
and the collection of mental aggregates would not be a self.

Why [is it said that a collection of mental aggregates would not be a self]?

Verse 136d

since they do not possess a configuration.

The reason is that they are not thought to possess bodily forms.
In addition,

Verse 137a

It is illogical to suppose that an acquirer and what it acquires are one thing,[101]

Why?

Verse 137b

since an agent and object of action[102] ***would be one thing.***

In this case an acquirer is what does the acquiring, i.e. it is an agent of action; while the things it acquires are acquisitions, i.e. they are its objects of action. And here what does the acquiring is a self and the acquisitions are the five aggregates. If a collection of aggregates were a self, then agent and object of action would become one, which is not a thesis held [by our opponents]. For then the consequence would be that the primary elements, the bodily forms that arise because of them, and pots and potters would be one and the same. As it is said [in the *Treatise* 10.1ab],

If fire is fuel,
an agent of action and its object would be one.

In addition, [in the *Treatise* 10.15, it is said,]

Every relation[103] *between a self*
and [its] acquisitions
is fully explained by reference to fire and fuel.
along with things such as pots and cloth.[104]

Just as you do not accept the thesis that fire and fuel are one and the same, you should also not accept the thesis that a self and its acquisitions are [one and the same].

Perhaps you are thinking that such a thing as an agent of action or an acquirer of things does not exist, but a mere collection of the things acquired does. It is now explained that there can be no argument for[105] this [thesis]:

Verse 137cd

If it is thought that an object of action exists without an agent of action,
it is not so, since an object of action does not exist without an agent of action.

It is not like this, since if it is not asserted that an agent of action exists, an object of action, which is without a cause, does not exist. In the *Treatise* [8.13] it is said,

In this [same] way acquisition is to be explained,
since an agent of action and action have been eliminated, and so forth.
Through [the explanation] an agent of action and action
one is to explain the remaining things.

When the "-tion" suffix in "acquisition" signifies action, "acquisition" means the action of acquiring. And since an action cannot exist without a cause that establishes its existence, both the object acquired and that which acquires [it] are established to exist. The "-tion" suffix can also signify the object of action. In this case "acquisition" means "what is acquired."[106] Therefore, just as an object of action is conceived in dependence upon an agent of action, and an agent of action as well in dependence upon an object of action, so too what acquires [things] is conceived in dependence upon its acquisitions, and acquisitions in dependence upon what acquires [them].

Moreover, [in *Treatise* 27.8, it is said,]

So a self is not other than what it acquires
and yet is not what is acquired;
nor does it exist without reference to what is acquired.
It is certainly not without existence.[107]

Therefore, it should be known that without an agent of action its object does not exist.

It should also be known that the existence of an agent of action with a svabhāva of its own[108] is refuted in a sūtra [called the *Discourse on Ultimate Emptiness*], where it is said,

> *No agent of action is perceived, but objects of action*[109] *and results [of action] exist.*

But it should not be thought that the existence of a dependently conceived thing that is part of convention is being refuted,[110] since it is also said in many places that

> *This person, who is afflicted by ignorance, performs meritorious actions.*

In addition,

Verse 138

Since the Muni[111] ***carefully demonstrated that a self exists in dependence***
on the six elements, which are earth, water, fire, air, mind and space,
and in dependence upon the organs of perception,[112]
which are the six bases of contact,

Verse 139

and since he spoke of it in dependence upon
minds and mental factors, it is not the same as these things,
each individually or only as a collection.
So the conception of a self does not pertain to them.

In a sūtra [*Discourse on the Meeting of Father and Son*[113]] it is said,

> *Great king, this being or person [exists in dependence upon] the six elements, the six bases of contact, and the eighteen activities of the mental organ*.[114]

The six elements are earth, water, fire, air, consciousness, and space. A self is conceived in dependence upon them. The six bases of contact, which are the organs of perception, are the eye, ear, nose, tongue, skin, and the mental organ.[115] A self is conceived in dependence upon them. The eighteen activities of the mental organ are the six pleasant activities of the mental organ, the six unpleasant activities of the mental organ, and its six neutral activities, all of which exist in relation to visible forms, sounds, odors, flavors, tactile objects, and the objects of the mental organ. A self is conceived in dependence upon these and also in dependence upon minds and mental factors.

Because a self was said to be conceived on the basis of the elements and the others, it is not the same as them. The meaning is that it is [by convention] other

than them. Nor can it be argued that it is the same as a mere collection of these things. Because the above-mentioned phenomena cannot be a self, it cannot be argued that the conception of a self pertains to them.

Therefore, since the object of the conception of a self is neither the aggregates nor other than them, the object of the conception of a self does not exist. Because the meditator does not perceive a self [when he searches for it among the phenomena in dependence upon which it is conceived], he knows that nothing belongs to a self by itself. And when the existence of all causally conditioned things has been refuted, a nirvāṇa free of acquisitions is obtained. Therefore, this analysis is truly excellent.

According to the view that the object of the conception of a self is the aggregates or mind, the conception of a self must arise when the aggregates [or mind] arise, since it is assumed that the support of the conception of a self exists as an entity. [The consequence is that the aggregates or mind are abandoned when selflessness is realized, since the conception of a self is to be abandoned by the realization that its object does not exist.][116]

Verse 140

"A permanent self is abandoned when selflessness is realized."
But the thesis that it is the support of the conception of a self is not accepted.
So it is quite a fine thing for you to say that the mistaken view of a self
is also eliminated by the knowledge of selflessness.

If a permanent self were the object of the conception of a self, then the conception of a self would be abandoned by the realization that it does not exist. So how can you say that the object of the conception of a self is one thing and that the conception of a self is rejected by seeing that a very different thing does not exist? What a fine theory!

In the next verse it is shown by means of an example how this theory is irrelevant.

Verse 141

If, when you see a snake is in a hole in the wall of your house,
you say that no elephant is there
and your fear of the snake is also abandoned,
oh my, what fun others will make of this!

If one is in danger, does not see that he is in danger, does not try to avoid it, and because of confusion, does not show fear and is unconcerned,[117] he will be bitten by the snake.[118] For the danger caused by the snake is not removed because there

is no elephant there. In the same way, should one say that aggregates or consciousness are a self and that a permanent self does not exist, how can he explain the conception of a self, whose object is the aggregates? Therefore, [the conception of] its possessions will definitely not be eliminated.[119]

It has been shown above, therefore, that a self does not possess the svabhāva of the aggregates[120] and that it is not other than the aggregates. In the next verse, it is said that a self is neither present in something else nor is that in which something else is present.

Verse 142

A self is not present in the aggregates.
Nor are the aggregates present in a self. For in this case,
if they were other than one another, these ideas would be correct,
but since they are not other than one another, these ideas are not correct.[121]

If they were other than one another, it would really be true that they are related as that in which something else is present and that which is present in something else. It is said that curd, for instance, is present in a metal bowl. Since the metal bowl and curd are other than one another according to the world, they are really seen as that in which something else is present and as that which is present in something else. But since the aggregates are not other than a self in this way, and a self is not other than the aggregates, they cannot be related as that in which something else is present and that which is present in something else.

In order to explain that a self is not a possessor of aggregates it is said,

Verse 143

It is not said that a self possesses bodily form,
since a self that does not exist cannot possess anything.
One who possesses a cow is other than it, but one who possesses a bodily form is not.
But self and bodily form are neither other nor the same.

The thesis that a self is either other than or the same as the aggregates has already been refuted. Possession can be expressed as it is in "Devadatta possesses a body," in which case it is assumed that they [i.e. possessor and possessed] are not other than one another, or it can be expressed as it is in "He possesses a cow," in which case it is assumed that they are other than one another. But since a self is neither other than nor the same as bodily form, it cannot be said that a self possesses bodily form.

Transient collection views, whose objects are mistakenly conceived, are explained below in terms of their number.

Verse 144

Bodily form is not a self. A self does not possess bodily form.
A self is not present in bodily form. Nor is bodily form present in a self.
One should understand all aggregates in these four ways.
These are accepted as [denials of] the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self.[122]

Because the transient collection view is the mistaken view of a self in relation to the five selfless[123] aggregates in four ways, these are [the theses opposed to] the twenty forms of the transient collection view.

One might say, "five [rather than four] forms of analysis are deemed relevant here [in the above verses], and that also in the *Treatise* [22.1] it is said,

He is neither the aggregates nor other than the aggregates;
The aggregates are not present in him, nor is he present in them.
A Tathāgata does not possess aggregates.
So what is a Tathāgata?

Therefore, it would be twenty-five forms. How do you explain twenty?"

These [twenty] forms of the transient collection view are distinguished in the sūtras. Without the conception of the aggregates one cannot become attached to a self. So it is introduced in terms of the conception of aggregates from these four perspectives. In other words, no fifth form of the transient collection view is possible, since one cannot become attached to a self unless one conceives the aggregates. So there are just these twenty forms of the transient collection view. The fifth thesis, which concerns [the] otherness [of a self and the aggregates], is included in the *Treatise* in order to refute the theory [of persons] of the Tīrthikas.

In the sūtras, it is said that the fruit of becoming a streamwinner arises when the twenty tall peaks of the mountain that is the transient collection view are destroyed by the thunderbolt of wisdom. In relation to this, it is said,

Verse 145

By the thunderbolt of the realization of selflessness, a mountain,
the [transient collection] view,[124] ***is destroyed. Destroyed together***
with a self are what rests on that bulky massive mountain,
these tall peaks of the transient collection view.

If the mountain that is the transient collection view is not destroyed by the thunderbolt of the wisdom of an advanced practitioner,[125] mental afflictions, which are [like] boulders [on this mountain], will increase daily. This [mountain] has always existed in saṃsāra. It is as high as the three worlds in height, and extends everywhere in all

directions. It arises from the golden earth of ignorance. It is destroyed by the thunderbolt of comprehending selflessness. Its tall peaks are to be understood to be those heights that are also destroyed, along with a self, by the thunderbolt.

So that the person imagined by the Āryasāṃmitīyas to be substantially real[126] can be set aside, there is an explanation [of their theory]:

Verse 146

***Some believe that a person is substantially real and inexplicable*[127]**
with respect to such things as sameness, otherness, permanence, and impermanence.
They believe that it is known to exist by the six consciousnesses
and that it is the support of the conception of a self.

According to this theory, a person cannot be other than the aggregates because it has been shown that a person is not conceived unless the aggregates are present. Moreover, the person is not of the svabhāva of the aggregates[128] because of the consequence that it would come to be and pass away [moment by moment]. So a person is inexplicable with respect to sameness as the aggregates and otherness than the aggregates. Just as the person is inexplicable with respect to sameness and otherness, so it is inexplicable with respect to permanence and impermanence. It is known to exist by the six consciousnesses. It is arguable that a person is substantially real,[129] since it is said to be a performer of actions, an enjoyer of objects, and to be in saṃsāra or nirvāṇa, which is to be in bondage or to be free from suffering. It is also accepted that it is the object of the conception of a self.

In the next verse it is also said that this theory is inconsistent.

Verse 147

Since it is not thought that mind is inexplicably related to bodily form,
a thing that exists*[130] *is not thought to be inexplicable.
If it were proved that a self exists as a thing
in the way mind is, it would not be inexplicable.

Therefore, this verse explains why it is impossible for something that is inexplicable to be substantially real.

In the next verse it is shown that a self is real by way of a conception.[131]

Verse 148

Because for you a pot does not exist as a thing,
***and it is inexplicably related to its own elements,*[132]**
***a self inexplicably related to the aggregates*[133]**
should not be thought to be established as existing by itself.

Just as it is believed that a pot is inexplicable insofar as it is neither the same as nor other than its elements and that it is real by way of a conception, so it would seem that a self, like a pot, should also be regarded as real by way of a conception.

Therefore, the above two verses have employed a refutation [of the thesis that a substantially real self is inexplicable] and a proof [that an inexplicable self is real by way of a conception]. Now, since it has been said that being the same [as] or other [than something else] is the basis of [anything being] a thing, the denial of the existence of a self is set out on the basis that it does not possess the character[134] of a thing.

Verse 149

You do not accept [the thesis] that consciousness is other than itself.
But you do accept [the thesis] that it is a thing other than bodily forms.[135]
These two characters[136] ***are seen in [all] things.***
Therefore, since a self is not a thing, it does not exist.

If this self of yours were substantially real, then like consciousness it would surely not be other than itself and would be other than the aggregates.[137] But this is not the case. Therefore, since these characters of a thing are not its basis, then like a pot a self does not exist.

Since analysis shows that a person is not substantially real, [it is said,]

Verse 150abc

So the support of the conception of a self is not a thing,
a self is not other than the aggregates and does not possess their svabhāva,[138]
It is without support-existence, and does not possess them.

If we carefully analyze the object of the conception of a self, [we see that] it cannot be argued that it is substantially real. It cannot be argued that it is other than the aggregates or that it possesses the svabhāva of the aggregates. It is also not that in which the aggregates are present and the aggregates are not that in which it is present. Because both positions, that of [a self] being a support for [the] existence [of the aggregates] and that of having [the aggregates as] a support for [its] existence were elucidated, a compound ["support-existence"] is employed for both. It also cannot be argued that a self is a possessor of aggregates.

Therefore, it may be thought that a self exists in some other way or that its [total] non-existence may be accepted. In any case it should not be accepted [that it exists] in any of the ways stated above. In explanation of this [other way in which its existence is accepted] it is said:

Verse 150d

It exists in dependence upon the aggregates.

The meaning of the expression, "This exists in dependence upon that," was [previously] explained in order to make it clear that conventional realities are not invalidated and that things being without causes is not accepted. Similarly, since we have cleared away the mistaken views mentioned above, we accept, on the basis of the theory that things are dependently conceived, only the theory that a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. We do this to retain the world's practice of naming and conceiving things, for we see that "self" has a conventional use.

In order to establish that a self is merely dependently conceived, an example of an external object is now cited and explained.

Verse 151

It is not accepted that a chariot is other than its parts
or that it is not other than them. It does not possess parts.
Its parts are not that in which it is present, nor is it present in its parts.
It is not a mere collection [of its parts], and it is not a configuration [of its parts].

The five positions of being the same, being other, being that in which something else is present, being that which is present in something else, and being a possessor [of parts] have already been explained above.

Since the two positions, those concerning a collection [of the parts of a chariot being a chariot] and concerning a configuration [of its parts being a chariot] still need to be established, they will now be explained.

Verse 152ab

If the mere collection [of its parts] were a chariot,
the chariot would exist even when it is divided into small pieces.

This idea [that the collection of its parts cannot be a chariot] was already explained above [in 135], but it is restated here in order to introduce further objections. So with respect to these [objections, it is said]:

Verse 152cd

Since a possessor of parts does not exist, parts do not exist,
and it cannot be said that their configuration is a chariot.

If what has parts does not exist, its parts do not exist. So its parts will not exist. Hence, what parts could exist whose collection is a chariot? The expression "and" [in 152d] has an inclusive meaning, since it is known that it cannot be said either that a mere collection of the parts [of a chariot] is a chariot or that the mere configuration [of the parts of a chariot] is a chariot. This is known because the parts of what does not exist do not themselves exist. So it cannot be argued that the mere configuration [of the parts of a chariot] is a chariot. That what has parts does not exist is [a thesis] accepted [by our opponents].

Alternatively, if you assert that the mere configuration is a chariot, you must consider whether it is the configuration of its parts or of the collection. If you assert that it is the configuration of its parts, you must say whether the configuration it possessed before [the chariot was assembled] is retained or lost [when the chariot is assembled]. Suppose you assert the former of these two. This cannot be argued,

Verse 153

Since the configuration of each of the parts would have existed before,
in the same manner as it does now, belonging to the chariot,
why did the chariot not exist when the parts were separated,
as it does now [when the chariot is assembled]?

Suppose that the configuration of the individual parts[139] [of a chariot] that existed before the chariot was assembled is the same as the configuration of the individual parts when the chariot has been assembled. Then just as the chariot did not exist before its parts were put together, it could not exist after the chariot is assembled, since the configuration of its parts is not different [at both times].

Suppose that one holds the second theory, which is that the configuration is different. In that case,

Verse 154

If, when a chariot exists now, the configuration of its parts
is different [from what it was before it was assembled,]
this should be perceived. But it is not.
So the mere configuration [of each of its parts] is not the chariot.

Suppose that at the time when a chariot exists, the configuration of its parts is different from the configuration they possessed beforehand. There are individual differences with respect to such things as the roundness of the wheels, the length of the axle, and the roundness of the pins. In this case, you should perceive the different configuration. But it is not perceived. In other words, it is not seen that when the chariot exists the configuration of its individual parts has changed.[140]

Similarly, things such as the roundness of the axle have not changed. So it cannot be argued that the configuration of the individual parts is a chariot.

If one asserts that it is the configuration of the collection of the parts, such as the wheels, this too is not correct. The following shows why:

Verse 155

Because for you this collection does not exist at all,[141]
[you must admit that] the configuration is not that of a collection of parts.
In dependence upon what does not exist at all,
how could a configuration exist in this case?

If the so-called collection were in the least way to be a thing, one could say that it would be a basis upon which a configuration is conceived. But the so-called collection of parts does not even exist in some small way. How could what does not exist in the least way be a basis upon which a configuration is conceived, since it is asserted [by the opponents] that a conception is just that which has substance as its basis.[142]

Suppose you were to assert that because a collection does not exist, a configuration that does not exist arises in dependence upon it. Even granting this,

Verse 156

Just as you accept this [thesis, so you should accept the thesis that]
in dependence upon unreal causes[143]
effects that possess a false svabhāva,[144]
all of them, are known to arise.

In dependence upon ignorance, which does not exist, motivating dispositions arise that possess a false svabhāva,[145] and in dependence upon a seed, which possesses a false svabhāva, a sprout arises that possesses a false svabhāva. In the same way, it should be realized that all causes and effects possess false svabhāva-s. It is as pointless to be attached to things as [it is pointless to try to eat] a shadow [of an animal], which lacks flesh that can be eaten; even if hundreds of attempts [are made] to eat it, [it cannot be eaten]. So why be attached to them?[146]

Verse 157ab

So it also cannot be argued that a thought of a pot[147]
arises on the basis of its elemental parts being related in some way.[148]

Some think that the thought of conventionally real objects[149] arises when their elemental parts are related in some way. But this idea is also overturned by the use of the example of a chariot. In addition,

Verse 157cd

Elemental parts[150] do not exist because they do not come to be.
For this reason, it cannot be argued that they have a configuration.

The way in which the elemental parts of conventionally real objects do not come to be was already explained [in 8–44 and 98–119].[151] Therefore, since they do not come to be, the elemental parts of conventionally real objects do not exist. How then could it be argued that things that do not exist are the support upon which conventionally real objects are conceived? Hence, since there can be no argument for asserting that conventionally real objects are substantially established,[152] conventionally real objects do not possess as their svabhāva[153] a special configuration of their elemental parts.[154]

Suppose you say:

> If a chariot is not found when we look for it in the seven ways just explained, then there is no chariot in the sense of the word "chariot" as used in the everyday world. But since it is seen that statements such as "Bring the chariot," "Buy a chariot," and "Build a chariot" are made, things such as chariots are accepted [as existing] in the everyday world. So they must exist.

However, you alone face this problem. When we look for a chariot in the seven ways explained above, it is not found. You believe that [the existence of] a thing should be established by analysis.[155] Nor do you accept any other way of establishing its existence.[156] So how do you explain the world's use of names in "Bring me the chariot" and other such statements? But we do not face this same problem, since

Verse 158

It does not exist in any of the seven ways
either in reality[157] or in the world.
But from the perspective of the world that does not analyze
[phenomena]
it is conceived in dependence upon its parts.

By looking for a chariot in [any of] the seven ways, [and discovering that] a chariot is neither other than nor the same as its parts,[158] neither the ultimate nor conventional existence of a chariot will be established. But from the point of view of the world, which does not engage in analysis, a chariot is conceived in dependence upon its parts, such as its wheels, just as are the elements of bodies and minds.[159] Therefore, since we accept things being dependently conceived, just as we accept things dependently arising in the sense of "just this being the

condition [for that],"[160] our position does not conflict with the use of names in the world and is worthy of being accepted by our opponents.

In this theory, it is clearly established that the conception of a chariot is applied according to a well-known agreement within the world. In addition, according to a well-known agreement within the world that does not analyze [things to determine their ultimate mode of existence], different names for a chariot are accepted. And so,

Verse 159abc

The chariot itself has parts. It has components
and is said to be an agent[161] ***by those wanderers [in saṃsāra],***
for whom it also exists as that which acquires [parts].

In relation to its parts, such as its wheels, a chariot is what has parts. In relation to its components, such as its wheels, a chariot is what has components. In relation to the action of acquiring of things that are acquired, such as wheels, a chariot is an agent. And in relation to things acquired, it is that which acquires them.

According to those who have misunderstood the sacred texts, mere collections of parts exist, but things that possess parts do not exist in any way, since they are not seen to be other than their parts.[162] Similarly, [they think that] only components exist, not things that have components. Things are objects [acquired] only, never agents [that acquire objects].[163] And since nothing is seen that is other than the things acquired, [they think that] things acquired exist, but the things that acquire them do not. However, because the very reasoning they use is a misunderstanding of a convention in the world, it has the consequence that not even the parts themselves could exist. Therefore,

Verse 159d

Do not destroy the conventions generally agreed upon in the world.

This [destruction of conventions] is to be rejected. If the conventions of the world are analyzed, they will [be shown] not [to] exist, even though they exist according to an unexamined consensus.

Therefore, by analyzing things in this way a meditator will very quickly reach the depths of the way things are.[164] How so?

Verse 160

How can what does not exist in [any of] these seven ways exist
if its existence is not found by a meditator?
Since he also easily enters into the way things are,
you should here accept its existence in this way.

A meditator, engaged in a careful examination, thinks,

> If a chariot were to exist by itself, then without a doubt it should be found to exist in one of the seven ways. However, it cannot be found [to exist in one of these ways]. Therefore, the so-called chariot is just an erroneous idea of those [whose vision has been] impaired by a coating of ignorance [over their wisdom eye],[165] since it does not exist by itself.

By coming to this conclusion, a meditator can also easily enter into the way things are.

The expression, "also" [in 160c] is used to imply that it is also true that conventions are not being violated.

Therefore, it should be accepted that a chariot exists just insofar as it is not subjected to analysis. This view is both unmistaken and useful and it should be accepted by the wise as certain once it has been [duly] considered.

You might reply[166] that even though a meditator does not perceive a chariot, he does perceive the collection of its parts.[167] We object that you are being foolish, since you are like someone who looks for threads in the ashes of a burnt piece of cloth.

Verse 161ab

If a chariot does not exist, then since
what possesses its parts does not exist, its parts do not exist.

"When a chariot is destroyed, are not things such as its wheels perceived? Therefore, how can it be said that the parts of what does not exist do not exist?"

It is not like that. Only by understanding the relation [of the parts of a chariot] to a chariot does someone think that things such as wheels are parts of a chariot. Only in this way. He will [also] think that these wheels possess parts on the basis of their relation to their own constituents. It is because you do not pay attention to[168] the relation between things such as the wheels and the chariot that you do not think of the wheels as its parts.

To understand the meaning of this thesis, the following example is given.

Verse 161cd

When, for instance, a chariot is burned, its parts no longer exist.
The flames of the mind consume both a thing and its parts.

For example, when fire burns a chariot, which has parts, its parts are also burned. In the same way, a chariot is completely consumed when the mind's fire, produced by rubbing together the sticks of analysis, burns away the things the mind

does not perceive [when they are sought in meditation].[169] For then the parts [of a chariot], which have become fuel for the fire of wisdom, do not remain, since they are burned away.

Just as, when we analyzed a chariot, it was shown that it is dependently conceived so that a conventional reality will not be rejected and meditators can easily enter into the way things are,

Verse 162abc

In the same way, by a well-known convention of the world,
in dependence upon aggregates, elements, and the six bases of perception
it is also accepted that a self is what acquires [these things].

Just as a chariot is conceived in dependence upon its wheels, its wheels being things acquired and the chariot being what acquires [them], in the same way, so that, in agreement with conventional reality, there is no contradiction to anything said in the world, a self, like a chariot, is accepted as an acquirer [of parts]. The five aggregates, the six elements, and the six bases of perception are acquired by a self, since a self is conceived as what acquires [them]. Just as things such as wheels are acquired by a chariot, the five aggregates, six elements and six bases of perception also are said to be things acquired by a self. Just as things such as wheels are acquired by a chariot, the aggregates are said to be acquired by a self.[170] And just as this account of things acquired and of what acquires them is accepted as an account of the discourse and thought of the world, so too should we accept, for a chariot, the object and agent of action account. So it is said:

Verse 162d

The things acquired are object of action and it is agent of action.

According to this account, the aggregates are the objects acquired, and a self is the agent.

Because reliance upon a self being dependently conceived is not a basis for thoughts such as a self being or not being the same entity [at different times], or being permanent or impermanent, are easily turned away.

Verse 163

Because it is not a thing that exists,[171]
it neither is nor is not the same entity [at different times],[172]
it neither comes to be nor passes away, it is not permanent, and so forth,
and it is without sameness or otherness.[173]

A self conceived in dependence upon the aggregates neither is nor is not the same entity [at different times]. If it were not the same entity [at different times], the following verses in the *Treatise* [27.6 and 27.12] would be contradicted:

What is acquired is certainly not a self;
for that comes to be and passes away.
How indeed will what is acquired
become what acquires it?

Likewise,

"If it did not exist [in the past], it could not be born."
Here an error occurs.
A self would then be an effect [produced by a cause]
or it would be born without a cause.

So if the aggregates were a self, a self would come to be and pass away. But it is not said to come to be and pass away. Therefore, since we should agree that there is the consequence that the aggregates are not a self, it cannot be argued that a self is not the same entity [at different times].

Similarly, we should not agree that a self is the same entity [at different times], since it is said [in *Treatise* 27.3–4]:

The statement, "I existed in the past,"
cannot be supported by argument.
That same person who existed in the past
certainly is not the same [entity] as this [present] one.
"This is the same self." If this is so,
the things it has acquired are different [from it].
What sort of thing is your self,
since it is totally separate from what is acquired?

The teacher [Nāgārjuna] asserts that this [self] does not come to be and pass away, since he said that coming to be and passing away is a consequence [that is unacceptable].

Nor does it possess properties such as permanence, since [in *Treatise* 22.12–14] the teacher, who carefully and fully examined a self by means of his examination of the Tathāgata, said:

How do the four, being permanent, impermanent,
both and neither, apply to He who is at peace?[174]
How do the four, having an end, not having an end, both or neither,
apply to He who is at peace?

He who firmly believes
that a Tathāgata exists
will think that when he has obtained parinirvāna[175]
he does not exist.
Since he is, according to his svabhāva, empty,
the thought should definitely not arise:
"After having achieved cessation,
Buddha exists or does not exist."

A self is neither the same as nor other than the aggregates. And so as it is said [in *Treatise* 18.1],

If the aggregates were a self,
a self would come to be and pass away.
If it were other than the aggregates,
it would be without the defining properties of the aggregates.

It is also said [in *Treatise* 10.1],

If fire is fuel
the agent and object of action are one.
[If fire is other than fuel
it should exist without fuel.][176]

Again, if one asks why a self should not be said to be the same entity [at different times], to not be the same entity [at different times], both or neither, it is said, "Because it is not a thing that exists."[177] If a self were to possess the nature of a thing,[178] then a self being the same entity [at different times], not being the same entity [at different times], both or neither, would exist. However, since a self does not exist in any way as a thing, these do not exist. It is said in a sūtra,[179]

Four things inexhaustible
were taught by the Protector of the World.[180]
They are sentient beings, space, bodhicitta,
and the Qualities of the Buddhas.
If they were substantially real,
they could be exhausted.
Since this is not so, these things are inexhaustible.
Hence, they were said not to be exhaustible.

Those who see neither that a self does not exist when they look for it in the seven ways nor that it cannot be permanent or impermanent, they wander [about in saṃsāra] because they conceive a self through the transient collection view [and because] out of ignorance that they identify something with the self.[181]

Verse 164

The self all wandering beings always
conceive as a self and in relation to which
they conceive its possessions
is an unanalyzed convention arising from confusion.[182]

When the Tīrthikas looked [for a self], they accepted [the thesis] that it is other than the aggregates because of [employing] their own faulty analysis of its svabhāva.[183] [Some] fellow Buddhists, who deny the existence of a self that is other than the aggregates, mistakenly accept [the thesis] that just the aggregates themselves are a self. Those who are without error fully understand the teaching of the Tathāgata; they become completely free a hundred times [over] because they know that a self does not exist.

A self is known as what takes the form of a human, an animal, and a hungry spirit. All of these are continuously bound by the ignorance that is the conception of a self. When it controls or is [closely] associated [in some other way] with something, the conception of its possessions arises, which is applied both to inner phenomena, such as the organs of perception,[184] which [in turn] are supports upon which a self is conceived, and to outer phenomena. This self exists because of ignorance,[185] not because it possesses a form of its own.[186]

Since it does not exist and it is given a name because of confusion,[187] a meditator does not in any way perceive it. If it is not perceived [in meditation], the things it acquires, such as the organs of perception,[188] will not be [perceived]. Therefore, since a meditator does not perceive a svabhāva[189] in anything, he is freed from saṃsāra. And so as it is said [*Treatise* 18.4],

When a self and its possessions are destroyed,
both internally and externally,
what is acquired passes away.
When that passes away, birth passes away.

In the next verse it is explained why, if a self does not exist, its possessions do not exist.

Verse 165

An object of action does not exist unless an agent of action exists.
So the possessions of a self do not exist unless a self does.
Therefore, when the emptiness of self and its possessions
is seen by a meditator, he attains freedom.

Just as a pot cannot exist if a potter does not exist, so the possessions of a self cannot exist if a self does not exist. Hence, a meditator obtains freedom and so

no longer experiences saṃsāra because he does not conceive a self and its possessions.

If the aggregates[190] are not apprehended, the mental afflictions[191] included [in them] will not arise. In this way, Śravakas and Pretyakabuddhas obtain a nirvāṇa that is free from attachments. Although Bodhisattvas have already seen selflessness they are empowered by compassion to hold on to their continuity [in saṃsāra] until awakened. So the wise should seek [to realize] selflessness in the way just explained.

3

COMMENTARY

Verse 120

When a meditator realizes that all mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra],
without exception, arise because of the transient collection view
and has understood that a self is the object of this [view],
he composes a refutation of its existence.

Candrakīrti has completed his explanation of the selflessness of phenomena in 8–119, and now in 120–65 he will explain the selflessness of persons. Selflessness is the absence of independent existence, which is the true intrinsic nature of all phenomena. Tsongkhapa says (i) that the selflessness of phenomena is the absence of the independent existence of phenomena other than persons, and (ii) that the selflessness of persons is the absence of the independent existence of persons. In 120–65 Candrakīrti uses reasoning and scripture to argue that a person does not possess independent existence and exists in dependence on the aggregates.

In 120c Candrakīrti refers to the person whose independent existence he denies as a self. The self lacks independent existence because it exists in dependence upon the aggregates. This is to be realized in meditation. I assume that the self whose absence of independent existence is taught by Candrakīrti s Buddhist opponents is a person-property self. In Candrakīrti's arguments against his Buddhist opponents' theories of persons it is assumed that the self whose independent existence is to be refuted is an acquirer of the aggregates. The difference is important, since this ambiguity of "a self" plays an important part of his refutation of the theses of other Indian Buddhist theories of persons.

Mental afflictions are mental states that disturb the mind. Mental afflictions contaminate actions, and contaminated actions cause suffering in saṃsāra in accord with the law of actions and their results. The six principal mental afflictions are (i) ignorance, which is conceiving all phenomena, including a self, as things that independently exist, (ii) desire, (iii) anger, (iv) pride, (v) dogmatic doubt about the Buddha's teachings, and (vi) five mistaken views that prevent

the attainment of nirvāṇa. The five mistaken views are (a) the transient collection view, (b) the two extreme views that a self is eternal and that a self perishes, (c) the view that beliefs that contradict the beliefs of the Buddha are better than his, (d) the view that unskillful practices are superior to Buddhist practices, and (e) the view that the Buddha is mistaken in his belief in such things as the law of actions and their results, rebirth, the two realities, and the four realities.

The faults of saṃsāra are the different forms of suffering it contains. Saṃsāra is the beginningless round of rebirths persons undergo because of the transient collection view. The principal faults of saṃsāra are birth, sickness, aging, and death, each a form of suffering. Birth is the eleventh link in the twelve links of the chain of dependent arising phenomena that bind us to saṃsāra; aging and death together are the twelfth. Ignorance is the first link, giving rise to all of the others.

When in C120 Candrakīrti says that the transient collection view is an affliction of wisdom that takes the form of thinking of a self and its possessions,[1] he means that our capacity to know a self and its possessions as they really are is afflicted by the ignorance that is the conception of a self and its possessions that causes them to appear to exist by themselves. The conception of the possessions of a self arises in dependence upon the conception of a self as existing independently.

Conceiving a self, according to Tsongkhapa, arises in dependence upon (i) the conceptual mind creating, in dependence upon the aggregates, a conceptual image of a self, (ii) the conceptual mind apprehending the conceptual image of a self as the self of which it is an image, (iii) the conceptual image appearing to exist by itself,[2] so that (iv) the conceptual mind conceives the self as a self that exists by itself. Let us refer to a conceptual image of an independently existing self as the object of the conception of a self and to an independently existing self of which it is the supposed conceptual image as the conceived object of the conception. When Candrakīrti refers in 120c to the object of the transient collection view and in C120 to the support of the transient collection view, he is referring to the object of the conception of a self rather than to its conceived object, since the conceived object does not exist at all, while the object is a self that Candrakīrti believes to exist by convention as object and support of the transient collection view. When in C120 Candrakīrti says that a meditator is to compose a refutation of the existence of the object of the transient collection view, he means that a meditator is to compose a refutation of the independent existence of the object of the conception of a self, since it is assumed that the existence of the conceived object of the conception of a self is refuted by refuting the independent existence of its object. This is how Candrakīrti avoids the problem of how to deny the existence of what does not exist.

The transient collection view has an innate form and a learned form. The innate form is the root cause of the mental afflictions. It is our beginningless disposition to conceive a self and its possessions. The learned forms of the transient collection view are those learned through argument, rhetoric, or acculturation. In 144 Candrakīrti enumerates twenty learned forms of the transient collection

view. The learned forms of the transient collection view are different ways in which the innate form of the view may surface in consciousness. According to Mahāyāna teachings, when emptiness is experienced on the path of insight, these twenty learned forms of the transient collection view are abandoned.

Conceiving a self as a self that is other than the aggregates is not a form of the transient collection view. A self other than the aggregates is a self that exists without dependence upon the aggregates. The transient collection view arises only for a self that is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates the collection of which is transient.

When in *Clear Words* Candrakīrti comments on *Treatise* 18.1 he quotes 120 to introduce Nāgārjuna's account of the selflessness of persons, which is presented in the *Treatise* at 18.1–7. Then he repeats what he says at the end of C120 except that he says that the object to be abandoned is the object of the conception of a self rather than the object of the transient collection view.

Clear Words 18.1

> A meditator understands that saṃsāra has as its root the [transient] collection view, and since a self is not perceived, he abandons the transient collection view. Since he abandons that [view], all mental afflictions pass away. For this purpose the meditator examines the afore-mentioned self [by asking]: what is this self that is the object of the conception of a self? As the object of the conception of a self, it must either possess the svabhāva[3] of the aggregates or be other than the aggregates.

When Candrakīrti asks what self it is that is the object of the conception of a self, he is setting up the argument that follows. When he says that the object of the conception of a self must the same as the aggregates or other than the aggregates he means that this must be if the object of the conception of a self exists by itself. By arguing that a self is neither other than the aggregates nor the same as the aggregates he draws the conclusion that a self does not exist by itself. Later he will argue that nonetheless the existence of a self is not entirely denied, since it exists in dependence upon the aggregates.

In 121–5 and their commentaries Candrakīrti argues that the self of the Tīrthikas, which is other than the aggregates, is not the self that is to be refuted when the independent existence of a self is refuted. In 126–41 he introduces and rejects the inference, which he attributes to the Sāṃmitīyas, that since there is no self that is other than the aggregates a self must be the aggregates. The Sāṃmitīyas think that if a self is not other than the aggregates it must be the same as the aggregates, since when the Buddha did not unqualifiedly deny the existence of a self he must have thought that there is a self that does not independently exist and a self that does independently exist. The self that does not independently exist is a person-property self, while the self that does is the collection of aggregates in dependence upon which a person-property self is

conceived. In 121–41 Candrakīrti argues, therefore, that a self whether with or without person-properties does not exist by itself because it is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates in dependence upon which it is conceived. In 146–9 he argues that no self can exist by itself as something that is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates. He attributes to the Āryasāṃmitīyas the thesis that a self exists by itself without being other than or the same as the aggregates.

Because Candrakīrti assumes that his opponents think that existence is independent existence, he formulates his arguments against the independent existence of a self as arguments against its existence. In my comments I will follow this practice when it is clear that it is independent existence that is in question, but when it is not clear I will call attention to it as independent existence.

Verse 121

> ***There are Tīrthikas who have supposed that a self is an enjoyer [of objects],***
> ***permanent, and without agency, constituents or motion.***
> ***In dependence upon slight variations of this [theory],***
> ***Tīrthikas have developed different systems of thought.***

Candrakīrti ended C120 by asking what self it is that is the object of the transient collection view. In 121 he presents the Sāṃkhyas' account of a self as an illustration of an account according to which the object of the conception of a self is a self without person-properties. In C121 Candrakīrti explains how the self as defined by the Sāṃkhyas fits into their account of the elements of reality. He then adds an explanation of how the self the Vaiśeṣikas define fits into their account of the elements of reality. A very brief statement of the Advaita Vedāntins' account of a self is also presented.

Candrakīrti does not think that the self defined by the Tīrthikas is the object of the transient collection view. But since the object of the transient collection view is an object of the conception of a self, Candrakīrti considers the Tīrthikas' accounts of the object of the conception of a self. What the Tīrthikas' accounts of the object of the conception of a self have in common is the thesis that it is other than the aggregates in the way that a cloth is other than a pot: neither is conceived in dependence upon the other. In the introduction to the translation I called the thesis that a self is other than the aggregates the otherness thesis. From the otherness thesis Candrakīrti will draw the unacceptable consequence that a self other than the aggregates does not exist in any way at all.

In C121 Candrakīrti explains the Sāṃkhyas' definition of a self without person-properties by explaining the place of a self within their account of the ultimate constituents of reality. One of the ultimate constituents of reality is the permanent self they claim to be the basis upon which "an empirical self" (*jīva*, *rtog*) is by convention said to possess a distinct identity and to retain this identity

through change. The Sāṃkhyas claim that there are two basic kinds of substance (*dravya*, *rdzas*). The first is a single "foundational nature" (*prakrti*, *rang bzhin*) of all objects of consciousness. The foundational nature has three aspects, called "lightness" (*sattva*, *snying stobs*), "darkness" (*tamas*, *mum pa*), and "motion" (*rajas*, *rtul*). The second kind of substance is consciousness. There are many consciousnesses, one for each empirical self, and each consciousness is the "self" (*ātman*, *bdag*) or "individual" (*puruṣa*, *skyes bu*) that makes the mental life of an empirical self possible by its presence in it. As Mikyö Dorje says in his commentary on this verse, their self "exists at the very heart of any mental operation constituting experience of objects."[4] This consciousness is thought to exist apart from being possessed by a subject and apart from possessing objects.

The Sāṃkhyas say that consciousness is like a mirror in which objects appear when the "intellect" (*buddhi*, *blo*), which is part of the empirical self, is changed when objects are presented to it. Just as reflections in a mirror do not change the mirror in which they appear, objects of consciousness do not change a consciousness, which is a permanent and partless phenomenon. The reference in 121a to the enjoyment of objects by a consciousness is a reference to the appearance in a consciousness of images of the modifications produced in the intellect. The appearance in a consciousness of images of the modifications produced in the intellect is reflected back onto the intellect, which for this reason appears to be conscious of objects.

The intellect is the first manifestation of the foundational nature. It produces an "ego" (*ahaṃkāra*, *ngar gyal*), which takes three different forms. From the first form, which is dominated by "lightness" (*sattva*, *snying stobs*), five organs of motion, five organs of sense-perception, and a "mental organ" (*manas*, *yid*) are produced. From the second form the subtle elements of the objects of sense-perception are produced. All of these are transformations of the foundational nature. The empirical self comprises consciousness, intellect, ego, and the mental organ. Because the empirical self identifies itself with intellect, ego, mental organ, or the body, all of which are objects that appear to consciousness, it experiences suffering in saṃsāra. The empirical self is said to obtain freedom from saṃsāra when the foundational nature reabsorbs all of its transformations in response to the realization by the empirical self that its own true nature is pure consciousness. At that time the true self, consciousness, stands alone. This is freedom from all appearance of rebirth in saṃsāra.

Candrakīrti's account of the Sāṃkhyas' theory takes the form of an exposition of verse 3 of Īśvarakrsna's *Sāṃkhya Verses* (*Sāṃkhyakārika*-s).[5] In this verse, both the foundational nature and selves are distinguished from twenty-three different kinds of things that are produced by the foundational nature within itself so that consciousness may enjoy objects. Candrakīrti explains which of these twenty-five kinds of things are produced and which are not, why those produced are produced, the order in which those produced are produced, and how their production can be stopped. His exposition is uncontroversial, except perhaps for his account of what is produced by the ego, which in some Sāṃkhya texts

reverses the causal functions that he assigns to the ego when it is dominated by darkness and when dominated by motion.[6] There is no need for an explanation of the details of Candrakīrti's exposition, since they are incidental to his primary objective, which is to refute the thesis that a self without person-properties is other than the aggregates. Readers who wish to explore further their theory of persons may read the growing number of excellent books on the philosophy of the Sāṃkhyas.[7]

Candrakīrti's account of the Vaiśeṣikas' theory of persons is also standard. Unlike the Sāṃkhyas, the Vaiśeṣikas explain how suffering arises and can be eliminated on the basis of distinguishing all things into six categories,[8] of which one is substance and another is a property that inheres in substance. Among the substances, some are permanent and others not. Among the permanent substances are selves, which are many in number and are without motion because they pervade space, which is another substance. A mental organ is another substance. It is a minimally sized permanent substance that is put in motion by a self and is present both in a self and in a body controlled by this self. Because of the motion of the mental organ, which is in contact both with a self and with external objects, the properties that inhere in a self arise. The mental organ is in contact with external objects by means of its contact with the sense-organs, which are in turn in contact with external objects. The cognition of objects by a self gives rise, in dependence upon volition, to suffering, in accordance with the law of actions and their results. The Vaiśeṣikas believe that when through meditation we cause the motion of the mental organ permanently to stop, cognition of objects no longer occurs, with the result that suffering and the other properties that inhere in a self cease to exist, since they exist in dependence upon the cognition of objects. This exposition of the Vaiśesika theory of persons calls attention to the fact that selves are permanent substances that can exist without the properties that inhere in them. Excellent accounts of the Vaiśeṣikas' theory of persons are available.[9]

Candrakīrti does not present a comparable detailed statement and explanation of the definition of a self presented by the Vedavādins, also known as the Advaita Vedāntins. Why he omits a fuller account of their theory of persons is not explained. This omission is curious, since it seems that at the time the Commentary was composed the Vedavādins had become an important Hindu philosophical school. Perhaps Candrakīrti omits a fuller account of their theory because he thought that in the *Blaze of Reasoning* Bhāvaviveka had already presented a proper Madhyamaka critique of the Advaita Vedānta philosophy.

. . .

In 122 Candrakīrti draws three unacceptable consequences from the Tīrthikas' accounts of a self. They are that (i) a self as defined by them does not exist, since it does not come to be, (ii) it is not the support or object of the conception of a self, since a self that does not come to be is not found in the causal basis of its conception, and (iii) it does not even exist by convention, since it does not come

to be. In 123 Candrakīrti draws a corollary, which is that the properties they claim are possessed by a self other than the aggregates do not exist because this self does not exist. In 124ab he again draws the consequence that it does not exist, but now from the fact that it is not conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. In 124cd, he again draws the consequence that a self other than the aggregates is not the support of the conception of a self, but this time from the fact that it is not real by way of a conception rather than from the fact that it does not exist, as he had argued in 122c. In 125 Candrakīrti rejects a Tīrthika attempt to explain away why in this life we do not think that a self is permanent and unborn.

Verse 122ab

> ***Because it does not come to be,***
> ***like a barren woman's child, it does not exist.***

There are two points made here. The first is that a self other than the aggregates does not exist because it does not come to be and the second is that it does not come to be in the way a barren woman's child does not come to be. The comparison to a barren woman's child implies that a self other than aggregates contradicts itself because as a self, it comes to be, and as other than the aggregates it is free from birth.

But the Tīrthikas distinguish a self other than the aggregates, which is not born, from an empirical self, which comes to be. So why does Candrakīrti think that the self they claim to be other than the aggregates does not exist because it does not come to be? Candrakīrti's answer to this question can be gathered from his comment in C122 that the theory of the Tīrthikas "is inconsistent with their own deliberations." With what deliberations does he think it is inconsistent? He is surely referring to their deliberations about the problem of how a self can escape birth in saṃsāra. The problem is that the otherness thesis implies that it is *false* that the self in question is born in saṃsāra, since it does not come to be. So the reason that Candrakīrti thinks that a self other than the aggregates does not exist, since it does not come to be, is that a self, according to the Tīrthikas themselves, is a self that is born.

What if the Tīrthikas should reply that the self that is born is the empirical self, not the self that is other than the aggregates? Candrakīrti would then reply that the self that suffers in saṃsāra does not cease to suffer because it is not other than the aggregates. So the problem of suffering is not solved.

Candrakīrti believes that his own theory of persons does not undermine discourse and thought about the problem of a self taking birth in saṃsāra, since it does not imply that it is false that a self is born in saṃsāra. In his theory it is true that a self is born in saṃsāra in the only way in which it can be true, which is by convention. His thesis, that a self does not exist by itself, does not contradict the convention that it is born, since a self that is born is a self that exists in

dependence upon the aggregates. This self comes to be by acquiring the aggregates that constitute the aggregates of a different rebirth.

Verse 122c

Neither could it be the support of the conception of a self.

The support of the conception of a self is a self that exists in dependence upon the aggregates. This is the object of the conception of a self. It exists in dependence upon the aggregates because it is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates as an acquirer of the aggregates. Candrakīrti thinks that a self other than the aggregates is not the support of the conception of a self because it does not come to be. In the last sentence of C122 Candrakīrti says that it is "from an ultimate point of view" that a self other than the aggregates is not the support of the conception of a self. He means that if we look for a self that is other than the aggregates in the causal basis of the conception of a self, it is not found, and that since it is not found there, it does not exist. Since the causal basis of the conception of a self is the aggregates, not finding there a self other than the aggregates is not surprising, since a self is other than the aggregates in the way cloth is other than a pot, which is by virtue of neither being conceived in dependence upon the other. Hence, the implication of C122 is that a self other than the aggregates cannot be the support of the conception of a self because it is not found in the causal basis of the conception of a self.

Verse 122d

That it exists by convention is also not accepted.

Here Candrakīrti draws the further consequence that a self other than the aggregates does not exist by convention. The self that exists by convention is a self that comes to be. Since a self other than the aggregates does not come to be, it is not the self that exists by convention. The self Candrakīrti believes to exist by convention is a self that is an acquirer of the aggregates. To deny that a self exists by convention is not to deny that it exists by itself, since what exists by itself is what is found in the causal basis of its conception, and what exists by convention is not. According to Candrakīrti, a self other than the aggregates exists neither by itself nor by convention. Since it exists neither by itself nor by convention, it does not exist at all.

Verse 123

Since their own reasoning [to the conclusion]
of [a self] being without birth undermines
all of the arguments used by the Tīrthikas in their different śāstras
to establish the properties of that [self], these properties do not exist.

Since a self other than the aggregates does not exist at all, it has no properties, which implies that the arguments used by the Tīrthikas to establish the existence of its properties are undermined, since what does not exist at all does not possess properties. For instance, the arguments used by the Sāṃkhyas to support the view that a self is an enjoyer of objects are undermined, since a self as they define it does not exist at all. Candrakīrti is not saying that it is false that a self other than the aggregates possesses the properties they ascribe to it. For when it is said that it is false that their self possesses these properties, it is assumed that it exists and it is said of what exists that it does not possess these properties. Candrakīrti is saying that since their self does not exist at all, it cannot be said that it does (or does not) possess the properties they ascribe to it.

Verse 124ab

So a self that is other than the aggregates does not exist;
for a self is not conceived unless the aggregates are present.

Candrakīrti concludes that a self other than the aggregates does not exist because a self is not conceived unless the aggregates are present. A self is not conceived unless the aggregates are present because it is by convention the acquirer of aggregates. Since a self other than the aggregates is not conceived in dependence upon the aggregates, it does not exist as a self.

In support of 124ab, Candrakīrti cites *Treatise* 27.7, which is that

Certainly no self is found that is other than what it acquires.
If it were other, it would be conceived
without reference to what is acquired,
but it is not [so] conceived.

In his *Clear Words* commentary on this verse Candrakīrti says that if a self were other than the aggregates it could be conceived without dependence upon the aggregates, just as cloth, which is other than a pot, can be conceived without dependence upon a pot.

After *Treatise* 27.7 is quoted in support of 124ab, *Treatise* 18.1cd is quoted in support of 124a. In *Treatise* 18.1cd it is said that a self other than the aggregates does not exist because it would be without the defining properties of the aggregates. The defining properties of the aggregates are their coming to be, being, and passing away moment by moment in a causal continuum. Because the aggregates do not exist by their own nature they can be said by convention to come to be, be, and pass away. In addition, a self is said by convention to come to be, be, and pass away moment by moment in a causal continuum when its aggregates do. But this convention does not imply that a self does not remain the same over time, since, by convention, a self both remains the same over time and constantly changes. That by convention a self constantly changes is established by the

experience of meditators. Since a self does not exist by its own nature, it can both remain the same over time and constantly change, since it possesses these properties in relation to different things. It remains the same over time because it is the acquirer of the ever-changing aggregates and it constantly changes because it is not other than the aggregates.

Although later in the Commentary Candrakīrti will say that an unacceptable consequence of the aggregates being a self is that a self would come to be, be, and pass away moment by moment, he thinks that this is an unacceptable consequence for the Sāṃmitīyas, but not for him, since they believe that the aggregates exist by their own nature. If the aggregates exist by their own nature, they cannot exist in a causal continuum. The Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the thesis that a different self is produced each moment, and this contradicts the convention that a self stays the same over time.

Since meditators establish the convention that a self constantly changes, what is established by convention is not merely what is established by ordinary experience and the causally effective usage of discourse and thought. Candrakīrti's confidence in what is revealed by meditative experience is comparable to Western confidence in what science reveals. For Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, meditative experience override the common mistaken belief that a self does not change moment by moment, just as science overrides the common mistaken belief that a pot does not change moment by moment.

Although *Treatise* 18.1cd will be discussed again when it is quoted in Candrakīrti's commentary on 163, here I translate his brief commentary on *Treatise* 18.1cd, since it clearly explains his meaning.

Clear Words 18.1

> For if a self should be other than the aggregates, it would not possess the defining properties of the aggregates.
>
> Just as a cow, since other than a horse, does not possess the svabhāva of a horse, so a self, since considered to be other than the aggregates, cannot possess the svabhāva of the aggregates. Now since aggregates are causally conditioned, they arise from causes and conditions and possess the defining properties of coming to be, being, and passing away [moment by moment]. It follows that if a self does not possess [as properties] the defining properties of the aggregates, it is unrelated to coming to be, being and passing away [moment by moment]. But if this were so, it is without existence, like a flower in the sky, or it is causally unconditioned, like nirvāṇa. Nor can it reasonably be said to be the object of the conception of a self. So it is also not correct to say that a self is other than the aggregates.

Since a self other than the aggregates is a self that does not possess as properties the defining properties of the aggregates, which are the properties of coming to

be, being, and passing away moment by moment, a self other than the aggregates will not come to be, be, and pass away moment by moment. Therefore, a self other than the aggregates either does not exist at all or it is causally unconditioned, and if it is causally unconditioned it is like a flower in the sky, something that possesses inconsistent properties. Candrakīrti adds that a self other than the aggregates cannot reasonably be said to be the object of the conception of a self. This is the thesis for which he argues in 124cd.

Verse 124cd

Nor do we say that it is in the world the support of mind conceiving a self,
since the mistaken view of a self occurs without knowledge of that [self].

"Conceiving" in "mind conceiving a self" is a reference to the conceiving that causes rebirth in saṃsāra. In this case the support of conceiving a self is a self without person-properties. Candrakīrti himself identifies the self concerned as an acquirer of the aggregates as parts. Candrakīrti denies that a self other than the aggregates is the support of the mistaken view of a self. The reason is that the mistaken view of a self occurs without knowledge of a self that is other than the aggregates. In 122c Candrakīrti denied that a self other than the aggregates could be the support of the conception of a self, but what he meant there is that it could not be a support that exists by its own nature. Here, in 124c, he is saying that it cannot be a support that exists by convention.

Verse 125

Even those who have been animals for many eons do not see this [self],
which is permanent and without birth.
But they are observed to embrace the conception of a self.
So a self that is other than the aggregates does not exist.

In his introduction to this verse Candrakīrti poses a possible objection to his 124cd thesis, that conceiving a self occurs without knowledge of a self that is other than the aggregates. The objection is that even though we may not now be aware that the self we conceive is other than the aggregates and has properties such as being permanent, this is, nonetheless, the self that we conceive because of previous habituation. Even though we may not now be aware of that the conceived self has these properties, we had in the past become habituated to conceiving a self that has these properties.

Candrakīrti's reply to the objection begins in his introduction to 125. The reply is that only those who have studied the śāstras in which it is taught that a

self possesses these properties conceive a self that possesses them. Those who have not studied these śāstras, Candrakīrti says, suffer in saṃsāra because they conceive a self. 125abc is an illustration of what he means. He claims that those who for many eons have been trapped in saṃsāra do not conceive a self that has such properties and yet suffer from conceiving a self. Candrakīrti replies to the objection simply by making the counter-claim that those who wander in saṃsāra conceive a self without knowledge of a self with the properties of being permanent and being unborn.[10]

To Candrakīrti's attack on the otherness thesis the Tīrthikas might raise the following objection:

> Candrakīrti's objections to the otherness thesis show only that a self other than the aggregates is not the empirical self. The fact that an empirical self is born does not show that a self that is other than the aggregates does not exist. Candrakīrti needs to refute the otherness thesis by refuting our reasons for asserting that there is, in addition to an empirical self, a self that is other than the aggregates. He needs to argue that our reasons are inadequate or self-contradictory, and he has not done this. Nor has he argued that there is no self other than a self that exists in dependence upon the aggregates.

Candrakīrti's failure to supply such a refutation is to be explained by the fact that his refutation of the otherness thesis occurs in the Commentary, which is meant for the use of Buddhists who wish to meditate on the selflessness of persons and the refutation of the otherness thesis is all that is needed for this purpose. In any case, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla raise detailed and convincing objections to the Tīrthikas' reasons for asserting the existence of a self other than the aggregates. So if readers seek the standard Mādhyamika full critique of Tīrthika theories of persons they need to consult the śāstras of Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla.[11]

. . .

Candrakīrti next takes up the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis, that a self is the same as the collection of the substantially real aggregates in dependence upon which it is conceived. He formulates their sameness thesis as the thesis that the object of the mistaken view of a self is the aggregates and he gives their reason for asserting the thesis.

Verse 126ab

> ***"Because a self other than aggregates does not exist,***
> ***the object of the mistaken view of a self is the aggregates themselves."***

In 126ab Candrakīrti introduces the sameness thesis as a second answer to the question raised in C120 concerning what the object is of the transient collection

view. In 126b he refers to this object as the object of the mistaken view of a self because the transient collection view arises from the mistaken view of a self. The mistaken view of a self is the conception of a self that exists by its own nature.

The Sāṃmitīyas' answer to the question of what the object is of the transient collection view is that it is the aggregates in the sense that it is a collection of aggregates. The Sāṃmitīyas argue that the aggregates are the object of the transient collection view because a self other than the aggregates does not exist. Their argument, Candrakīrti assumes, is based on the assumptions (i) that a self that is without person-properties must exist by itself if reference to a person-property self is to be possible and (ii) that this self without person-properties exists by itself only if it is either other than or the same as a collection of substantially real aggregates in the sense that the conception of the person-property self in fact refers to that collection.

Verse 126cd

Some assert that all five aggregates are the support of the mistaken view of a self
and others assert that it is mind alone.

In C126cd Candrakīrti explains the scriptural basis upon which some Sāṃmitīyas assert that all five aggregates are the support of the mistaken view of a person-property self. The support of the mistaken view of a person-property self is a self. They believe that

> attachment to a self pertains to that [object, all five aggregates], since the Bhagavān said
>
> > *Monks, all Śramaṇas and Brāhmins who correctly understand the thought of a self understand that it pertains only to the five acquired aggregates.*
>
> Therefore, in order to make it clear to them [the monks] that this view of theirs [the Śramaṇas and Brāhmins] pertains to a collection whose nature is to be transient rather than to a self and its possessions, it was said [by the Buddha] that "the view that assumes the form of a self and its possessions is the transient collection view."

Let us call the passage quoted from scripture "the scriptural-support passage" because it is the scriptural passage used to support the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self. In my translation of C126cd I have inserted a few bracketed words that I believe to help make clear its meaning. The Sāṃmitīyas are represented as saying that the Buddha identified the object of the transient collection

view with a collection of aggregates rather than with each of the aggregates.[12] It is assumed, I believe, that the thought of a self in this case is the thought of a person-property self. In what follows, when I think that it becomes important to call attention to the assumption that it is the thought of a person-property self I will do so.

Candrakīrti says that other Sāṃmitīyas think that mind is a self. Those who adopt the sameness thesis as the thesis that mind is a self do not adopt it on the basis of the scriptural-support passage. They may have adopted this version of the sameness thesis because they believe that it is the mind that carries the seeds planted by contaminated actions from one life into the next and that doing so is a function of a self. However, Candrakīrti does not say that mind is thought to be a self because it is what it carries the seeds planted by contaminated actions from one life to the next.

The sameness thesis as the thesis that mind is a self is the thesis that a collection of minds is a self, just as the sameness thesis as the thesis that the aggregates are a self is the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self. For Candrakīrti says that the mind with which the Sāṃmitīyas identify a self is either the six different kinds of minds that arise in dependence upon their corresponding six organs of perception or all of the consciousnesses that arise in a causal continuum of momentary consciousnesses. For this reason I will represent this formulation of the sameness thesis as the thesis that minds are a self.

Candrakīrti assumes that the objections he presents to the thesis that the aggregates are a self also apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the thesis that minds are a self, since in both cases the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the identification of a self with a collection of momentary substantially real phenomena and most of his objections are based on this identification.[13] Candrakīrti does not include, within the category of minds with which a self is identified, the sorts of minds the Cittamātrins and Bhāvaviveka identify with a self. Perhaps he does not mention the views of the Cittamātrins and Bhāvaviveka because he wishes to restrict his discussion to the theses with which Nāgārjuna was concerned or because he does not want to complicate his attempted refutation of the sameness thesis by setting out their versions of the sameness thesis. Tsongkhapa applies Candrakīrti's objections to the versions of the Cittamātrins and Bhāvaviveka.

Although Candrakīrti attributes to some Sāṃmitīyas the thesis that the aggregates are a self and to others the thesis that minds are a self, in what follows I will follow his own practice of usually discussing only its aggregates version. He surely primarily discusses this version of the thesis because it is the thesis that Nāgārjuna rejects in the *Treatise*.

In C132 and C133 Candrakīrti will formulate an objection to the Sāṃmitīyas' use of the scriptural-support passage. It may be because the scriptural-support passage does seem to lend support to the view that the aggregates are a self that Candrakīrti argues that it does not support their view. He does not anywhere in the Commentary object to the use of the two passages from the *Udānavarga* the Sāṃmitīyas use to support the thesis that minds are a self.

Verse 127ab

If the aggregates are a self, it follows that
because they are many, a self too would become many.

Candrakīrti draws the consequence that a self would become many from the thesis that the aggregates are a self and the convention that there are many aggregates. When he says that a self too would become many, he surely means that it would become many selves. I think that he is assuming that since the Sāṃmitīyas believe (i) that a collection of aggregates is a self and (ii) that by convention a collection of aggregates is many aggregates, they are committed to the thesis (iii) that many aggregates are a self; and at this point he assumes (iv) that if many aggregates are a self, each of the aggregates is a self, and infers (v) that if each of the aggregates is a self, and there are many aggregates, a self is many selves. Let us call this consequence *the many-selves consequence* of the sameness thesis.

The Sāṃmitīyas might have a reply to the argument of the many-selves objection. They might deny the truth of its premise that if many aggregates are a self, each of the aggregates is a self. What would Candrakīrti say in defense of his use of this premise in the many-selves objection? He would most likely say that the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the denial of the thesis that many aggregates are a self in the sense that they are, as many (a collection), a self. For if the Sāṃmitīyas believe, as Candrakīrti assumes they do, that reference to things must be to things that exist by their own nature, and that a collection of such things does not exist by its own nature, they cannot claim that the conception of a self refers to the aggregates as a collection without also referring to each of the aggregates in the collection.

Candrakīrti thinks that it is false that a self is many selves on the basis of a quotation from a scripture in which the Buddha says that a self is one. Candrakīrti interprets the quotation as saying that to be a self is to be one self. He accepts the thesis that to be a self is to be one self not only because the Buddha implied that it is so, but also because he believes that it is a well-established convention of discourse and thought.

Candrakīrti assumes that the many-selves consequence undermines the foundation upon which discourse and thought about a self rests. Candrakīrti typically draws from his opponents' theses consequences that are unacceptable because they contradict (i) what is true by convention, (ii) what is true according to one of the opponents' other theses, or, if they are Buddhists, (iii) what the Buddha definitively said. The consequence of the sameness thesis, that one self is many selves, is unacceptable in all three ways.

All Indian Buddhist philosophers believe that the conventions of the world are the foundation upon which the explanation of the path to freedom from suffering in saṃsāra is built, and that if these conventions are undermined by an account of a self, the account is unacceptable. Hence, one of the objections that

one Indian Buddhist philosopher can bring against a thesis of another is that it undermines the conventions of discourse and thought about the world.

Verse 127cd

> ***A self would be a substance, and because it would be regarded as a substance,***
> ***the mistaken view of it [as a substance] would not be mistaken.***

The second unacceptable consequence of the sameness thesis is that a self is a substance.[14] This consequence I call *the substance consequence*. In the argument given for the substance consequence Candrakīrti assumes that the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the thesis that the only way in which a collection of aggregates could be a self is by each of the aggregates in the collection being a self, since the Sāṃmitīyas believe that a collection of aggregates as a collection does not exist by itself, and what does not exist by itself is not a self. Therefore, since they believe that the aggregates are substances and they imply that each of the aggregates is a self, they are committed to the thesis that a self is a substance. Candrakīrti assumes that the Sāṃmitīyas have not thought about whether the sameness thesis can be made consistent with their assumption that reference requires an object that exists by itself.

Candrakīrti cites two passages from scripture that he believes can be used to show that in no Indian Buddhist philosophical school would the consequence that a self is a substance be accepted. In the first passage, the Buddha says that a person is one of the five things that are "mere names, terms or conceptions." When the Buddha said this, according to Candrakīrti, the meaning is that the name and conception of a person refers to a self that exists in dependence upon being named and conceived, which implies that a self is not a substance. In the second passage, which is also quoted by other Buddhist philosophers,[15] it is said that someone is by convention called a sentient being (or person) in dependence upon the aggregates in the way that a chariot is by convention called a chariot in dependence upon the collection of its parts. These passages are accepted in all schools as showing that a self is not a substance, though they are otherwise differently interpreted.

…

In 128 Candrakīrti draws four nihilistic consequences from the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis. These consequences follow from the thesis. The nihilistic consequences he draws are the unqualified denials of (i) the existence of a self after parinirvāṇa, (ii) the existence of a self over time, and (iii) the efficacy of the law of actions and their results (a) because the result of an action is not experienced by the agent of the action and (b) because the result is experienced by a different person. The first consequence Candrakīrti draws is based on the Sāṃmitīyas' acceptance of the thesis that the aggregates pass away when parinirvāṇa[16] is

obtained, and the second, third, and fourth consequences he draws are based on their acceptance of the thesis that the aggregates are momentary substantially real phenomena.

Verse 128a

When nirvāṇa is obtained, a self would certainly pass away.

Here and in its commentary Candrakīrti presents a third unacceptable consequence of the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis. It may be called *the parinirvāṇa consequence*. The Buddha said that the aggregates pass away when parinirvāṇa is obtained. Candrakīrti is arguing that if the aggregates are a self, it possesses the properties of the aggregates, which include the property of passing away at the time of parinirvāṇa. Therefore, Candrakīrti claims that the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the consequence that a self passes away at the time of parinirvāṇa. By convention, however, the path does not lead to the extinction of a self.

Candrakīrti himself does not assert that a self that exists by itself does or does not pass away at the time of parinirvāṇa, since he denies that a self exists by itself. However, as a matter of convention, he believes, a self does not pass away at that time. Candrakīrti does not believe, as he assumes the Sāṃmitīyas do, that Śravakas and Pratyekabuddhas obtain parinirvāṇa at the end of the life in which they obtain nirvāṇa, since he thinks that only those who become Buddhas during their last life in saṃsāra obtain parinirvāṇa. At the time of the parinirvāṇa of a self, according to Candrakīrti, the aggregates are transformed into one of the Spiritual Bodies of a Buddha,[17] and since at that time the aggregates cease to be aggregates, they are said to pass away.

The Sāṃmitīyas may reply that the aggregates do not cease to exist at the time of parinirvāṇa, but instead cease to function, and on this basis claim that they are not committed to the view that the pursuit of parinirvāṇa is the pursuit of extinction. To this reply Candrakīrti may object, first of all, that the Sāṃmitīyas' view of final liberation is then like that of the Vaiśeṣikas, according to which a self in its final state is without consciousness. This view is tantamount to extinction and few would find it an attractive goal of spiritual practice. So even though the Sāṃmitīyas do not as the Vaiśeṣikas do assert that a self is other than the aggregates, the goal of practice is the same. Second, Candrakīrti may object that if the passing away of the aggregates is the cessation of their functioning, there is no reason why the aggregates could not be caused to begin again to function. If it is said that the Śravakas and Pratyekabuddhas simply cause their aggregates to cease to function, Candrakīrti might say that a Buddha would surely come along to cause their aggregates to function once again so that they may begin the practice of the Mahāyāna path, since it is the final path to freedom for all sentient beings.[18]

Verse 128b

During the moments prior to obtaining nirvāṇa it would come to be and pass away.

A fourth unacceptable consequence is now drawn from the sameness thesis. The consequence may be called *the momentary-self consequence*, since the consequence is that a self would exist at a moment only to be replaced in the next moment by another self by reason of possessing "the svabhāva of the aggregates." Here I believe that Candrakīrti uses "svabhāva" to refer to the defining properties of the substantially real aggregates, which are the properties of existing for a moment and in the next moment being replaced by another. Therefore, if the substantially real aggregates are a self, one self is replaced by another in the next moment. The problem created by this consequence is that conventional discourse and thought about a self are undermined.

Candrakīrti agrees that the aggregates come to be and pass away moment by moment, each aggregate causing the next to arise, but since he does not believe that they are substantially real, there is no objection to the aggregates entering into a causal continuum. He believes that because neither selves nor the aggregates are substantially real and that selves are not the same as their aggregates, it can be said by convention that selves, as the agents that acquire the aggregates as parts, are the same over time, yet change in the sense that their aggregates come to be and pass away moment by moment.

The thesis that a self is reborn in saṃsāra, Candrakīrti implies, is inconsistent with the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis. The momentary-self consequence is presented in the form of an example. Candrakīrti says that if the sameness thesis is true, the Buddha would not have referred to himself as being king Mandhatr in a previous life. The convention of discourse and thought, according to which we can refer to our past selves, is undermined if an independently existing self is not the same self in its different rebirths. The Buddha said that he does not contradict the conventions of the world, among which he believes is the convention that a self undergoes rebirth.

Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.6 and *Treatise* 18.1ab to support his claim to have correctly represented Nāgārjuna's thought in this matter. In C163 Candrakīrti will again quote *Treatise* 27.6 and the whole of *Treatise* 18.1. Since in my commentary on 163 I will translate and discuss *Treatise* 27.6 and *Treatise* 18.1 along with Candrakīrti's commentaries on them, I will not discuss them here. *Treatise* 27.6 contains not only the argument that a consequence of the sameness thesis is that a substantially different self comes to be and passes away, but also the consequence that the acquirer and the acquired are one, both of which are contradicted by convention.

The momentary-self consequence is a consequence of the sameness thesis to be found in the śāstras of the Tīrthikas. The Tīrthikas draw the consequence of the sameness thesis in its formulation as minds are a self. The standard reply to

the consequence is that the efficacy of the convention that a self is the same over time is explained by the fact that the substantially real aggregates or minds with which a self is identified exist in a causal continuum.[19] In 129 Candrakīrti presents this reply and argues that it fails because aggregates cannot exist in a casual continuum if they have momentary existence and are substantially real.

Verse 128cd

Since the agent of action does not exist, neither would the result of its action.
[The result of] what is done by one would be experienced by another.

Candrakīrti now presents his fifth and sixth unacceptable consequences of the sameness thesis. The consequences I call *the agent-enjoyer consequences*. The first consequence is that the agent of action would not experience the results of its own actions, since this agent would not exist in the next moment and the second is that a different agent would experience them, since the result would be experienced by a different self, since the result, according to the law of actions and their results, must exist. These two are also common objections posed by the Tīrthikas.

In support of the consequences drawn in 128bcd, Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.10–11. His commentary on 27.10 is as follows.

Clear Words 27.10

"What is the error if [we say that] this [present self] is other than a past self?" It is said that

If this [present self] were other[20] [than a past self],
even though [the existence of] that [past self] is denied, it would exist.
If this were the case,
it would be [re]born without having died.

If a present self is other than a past self, then, because [the existence of] that past [self] is denied, i.e. is destroyed, a present self would be without a cause, since it would be separate in existence from that one. Nevertheless, [the present self is] other, and so it would exist there.

If this [self] and a past self are other than one another, then because of this otherness, there should be no passing away of an earlier self when this later self comes to be, just as a cloth does not pass away when a pot comes to be. Since there is no passing away [of a past self when a present self comes to be], then it should continue to exist there,

where its previous lives were lives as gods, humans, or other beings in the same way in which [its lives] were obtained before, according to caste, position, and so forth. It is born here [in this life] without having died. This is not possible for one who existed as a human; and the earlier self, as a god or some other being, should then continue to exist. So "I did not exist in the past," is not correct.

Candrakīrti explains *Treatise* 27.10ab in the first paragraph and *Treatise* 27.10cd in the second. In explanation of 27.10ab he says that if the selves in a causal continuum of selves are other than one another, then since a past self passes away before a present self comes to be, a present self comes to be without a cause. His explanation of *Treatise* 27.10cd is that if a past self and a present self are other than one another, a past self would no more pass away when a present self comes to be than cloth would pass away when a pot comes to be. Therefore, a self would be reborn without having died. Both of these unacceptable consequences follow from a past self being other than a present self. Although it occurs in the commentary of 128cd, *Treatise* 27.10 is obviously used to support 128b.

Treatise 27.11 is used to support 128cd. Candrakīrti's commentary on this verse is as follows:

Clear Words 27.11

If again, after [the existence of] the past self has been denied, [it is said that] this [self] exists[21] here [and now], what is the error? There are many errors with this [view]. How so? It is like this:

[The karmic results of] actions would be totally destroyed or annihilated.
[The karmic results of] actions performed by one [person]
would be enjoyed by another.
There would be such consequences and more.

If this [present self] exists after [the existence of] a past self has been denied, then since the past self has passed away there, and here the other has come to be, the existence of the [past] self would be annihilated. When the existence of that [past] self is totally destroyed, its actions and their yet unexperienced results would be totally destroyed, since the underlying support would be totally destroyed. There would be the destruction [of the results of actions] because of the absence of an enjoyer. In this case, results of actions performed by a past self would be experienced by a later self. So the result of an action performed by one would be experienced by another. Furthermore, [according to *Treatise* 17.23,]

One who did not perform an action would fear
experiencing the result of an action he did not perform.

This is thought to be incorrect.

Since *Treatise* 27.11 and its commentary are self-explanatory, I need not comment on them here.

Verse 129a

"There is no error if they exist in a [causal] continuum."

Since in 129a the Sāṃmitīyas are represented as replying that the momentary-self and agent-enjoyer consequences cited by Candrakīrti in 128bcd do not apply to the sameness thesis because the aggregates exist in a causal continuum, I call it *the causal-continuum reply*. They think that the consequences cannot be drawn because the efficacy of the conventions (i) that a person-property self is the same over time, (ii) that it receives the results of its actions, and (iii) that no other self receives the results of its actions can be explained by the fact that the aggregates within the collection with which a self is identified exist in causal continuum. So they believe that the momentariness of the aggregates does not undermine these conventions, since the causal connectedness of the aggregates other than one another is the basis upon which the conventions are efficacious.

Verse 129b

But the mistake of a [causal] continuum was explained by an earlier analysis.

Candrakīrti's objection to the causal continuum reply is that he has already shown that if the aggregates are other than one another, they cannot enter into a causal continuum. To say that the aggregates are other than one another is to say that each exists by itself, without dependence upon the others. But if one aggregate follows a second, Candrakīrti objects, the second cannot be an effect produced by the first, since if the second exists by itself, it cannot exist in dependence upon the first as its effect. So the Sāṃmitīyas cannot argue that the efficacy of the three conventions, that a self is the same over time, that a self receives the results of its actions, and that no other self receives the results of its actions, can be explained by the aggregates being in a causal continuum.

But suppose the Sāṃmitīyas were to reply that there is a causal relation between the aggregates because causality is reducible to law-like succession of aggregates or to the operation of causal powers possessed by the aggregates.

Candrakīrti could object that if causality is simply law-like succession, it is because the conceptions of cause and effect are superimposed upon law-like successions of aggregates upon which the conception of independent existence is superimposed. If the Sāṃmitīyas were to say that causality is the operation of causal powers possesses by the aggregates, Candrakīrti's objection is presented in *Introduction* 6.59–61, where he explains why a causal continuum of substantially real momentary phenomena is not possible. To understand his objection we need to understand his comments on *Introduction* 6.61, the first line of which he quotes in C129. *Introduction* 6.61 in full is as follows:

> *The aggregates*[22] *associated with a Maitri or Upagupta cannot*
> *form a single [causal] continuum, since they are other than one another.*
> *Things other than one another according to their defining properties*
> *cannot be included in a single continuum.*[23]

To understand this verse we need to understand its context. The context of the verse is Candrakīrti objecting to the Cittamātrins' thesis that a mind that exists by itself arises from an immediately preceding mind that existed by itself and passed away because the mind that immediately precedes the other mind possesses the potential to create the following mind. Since the Cittamātrins assume here that causality is the operation of causal powers, in 6.59 Candrakīrti points out that if one substantially real mind possesses the potential to create another, anything can be created by anything else by such a potential, since the minds are conceptually unrelated by reason of being other than one another. In 6.60 Candrakīrti argues that it cannot be proven that aggregates in the same causal continuum are other than one another. In 6.61 he says that if the mental aggregates of Maitri are other than one another in the way his mental aggregates are other than the mental aggregates of Upagupta, they cannot enter into a causal continuum. Candrakīrti's reference in 129b to this verse is meant to imply that if the aggregates are other than one another, they cannot enter into a causal continuum.

To show that Nāgārjuna denies that things other than one another enter into a causal continuum Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.16. Here is the verse and Candrakīrti's commentary on it.

Clear Words 27.16

> *If a human being were other than a god,*
> *there would be no permanence.*
> *If a human being were other than a god,*
> *there would be no continuum.*

If a god is one thing and a human being is another, then because an earlier self, as a human being, is destroyed and something else comes to

> be here, that earlier self that is a human being is destroyed there; so there would be no permanence. If [it is said that] there is no absence of anything being permanent because of the progression of a continuum of those [selves], it is replied, "If a human being were other than a god, there would be no continuum."
>
> If a human being is other than a god, then just as a neem tree does not give rise to a continuum that is a mango tree, so a human being does not give rise to a single continuum that is a god. And then there should be no permanence because the former [self] would be destroyed.
>
> Alternatively, [it can be said that] if a human being is other than a god, there should be no development of a continuum.[24] But there is a development of a continuum, since a human being comes to be from a god in a single continuum. Therefore, a human being is not other than a god because of the consequence that there is no continuum. Wherefore [he concludes that] there is no absence of permanence either.

The pertinence of *Treatise* 27.16 to Candrakīrti's objection to the causal-continuum reply is that the Sāṃmitīyas cannot explain the efficacy of the convention that a self experiences the result of its action by positing a causal connection between the aggregates, since the aggregates are other than one another. A human being cannot come to be from a god if a human being and a god are unrelatedly other than one another. An unacceptable consequence of the thesis that the aggregates are other than one another is that the convention, that aggregates exist in a causal continuum, is false.

Verse 129cd

> ***So [for these reasons] it cannot be argued that the aggregates or mind[s] are a self,***
> ***[and] because the world of sentient beings does not have an end, and so forth.***

In 129c Candrakīrti seems to be drawing a conclusion from the arguments of 127–9ab and using his statement of the conclusion as a conclusion he draws from 129d. In 129cd Candrakīrti draws a seventh unacceptable consequence from the sameness thesis. The consequence we may call *the answered-questions consequence*.

The answered-questions consequence is that if the sameness thesis is true, the Buddha would have answered the famous fourteen questions he refused to answer. The first four questions he was asked were whether "the world of sentient beings" (*loka*, *'jig rten*) has an end, does not have an end, both does and does not have an end, or neither does nor does not have an end. The second four questions the Buddha refused to answer are whether the world of sentient beings is permanent, impermanent, both, or neither. The third four questions are whether a

Tathāgata exists after he dies, does not exist after he dies, both does and does not exist after he dies, or neither does nor does not exist. The final two questions he refused to answer are whether a self is the same as a body and whether a self is other than a body. According to one tradition of interpretation of the Buddha's refusal to answer these questions, he refused to answer because the questioner would have been misled by any possible answer because of the questioner's beliefs.[25] By contrast, Candrakīrti's commentary makes it clear that he interprets the Buddha's refusal to give a positive answer to any of these questions simply as the straightforward denial of the truth of any answer to the questions.[26]

In 129cd Candrakīrti is arguing that if the Buddha had thought that a collection of aggregates or minds is a self, he would have answered these questions. In particular, if he had thought that a collection of aggregates or minds is a self, he would have said that the world of sentient beings ends at the time all persons obtain parinirvāṇa, since the collection of aggregates or minds passes away at the time of the parinirvāṇa of sentient beings. Similarly, if a collection of aggregates or minds is a self, the Buddha would have said that the world of sentient beings is impermanent, since a collection of aggregates or minds is impermanent, and he would have said that a Tathāgata passes away after he dies, since a collection of aggregates or minds passes away at that time.[27]

To support the idea that the Buddha's refusal to answer to any of the fourteen questions implies that he denies the truth of any answer to them, Candrakīrti quotes a sūtra he says is accepted in Pūrvaśaila School. In the sūtra it is said that a monk who answers these questions is to be expelled from the order. Why Candrakīrti quotes a sūtra of the Pūrvaśaila School is not clear, since in all Indian Buddhist schools it was surely thought to be important not to give answers to the questions the Buddha left unanswered. It is possible, of course, that Candrakīrti quotes the sūtra because he believes the Sāṃmitīyas accept this particular scripture. The problem with a Buddhist giving an answer to the questions not answered by the Buddha is that it constitutes a rejection of the authority of the Buddha.

Verse 130ab

According to your theory, when a meditator sees selflessness
he must be seeing that things do not exist.

Candrakīrti here presents an eighth unacceptable consequence of the sameness thesis**.** The consequence of the aggregates or minds being a self is that when a meditator sees selflessness, he sees that the aggregates or minds do not exist by themselves. This consequence, which may be called *the realization-of-selflessness consequence*, is based on Candrakīrti's assumptions that the object whose selflessness is to be seen is a self and that the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the view that each of the aggregates is a self if a collection of the aggregates is a self. He thinks that they are committed to this view because they believe that

the object of a name or concept must exist by itself and they do not believe that a collection of aggregates as a collection exists by itself. He is arguing that since the Sāṃmitīyas imply that each of the aggregates or minds is a self, and the realization of the selflessness of persons is the realization that a self does not exist by itself, the Sāṃmitīyas are committed to the denial that the aggregates or minds exist by themselves. We are meant to conclude that the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis is inconsistent with the Buddha's doctrine of what is realized when the selflessness of persons is realized.

When in the commentary Candrakīrti refers to a meditator seeing reality, he is referring to a meditator seeing the reality of suffering. When he says that a meditator sees the reality of suffering in its aspect of being selfless he means that a meditator realizes that suffering does not exist by itself. He paraphrases the realization that suffering is selfless as the realization that all phenomena are selfless because he thinks that all phenomena, save for emptiness itself, are included within the reality of suffering. The reality of suffering encompasses ignorance and all the phenomena contaminated by ignorance.[28]

In 130cd and 131 Candrakīrti considers a possible reply to the realization-of-selflessness consequence and presents two objections to the reply.

Verse 130cd

If at that time [it is said that] a permanent self is abandoned,
then your thesis is that neither the aggregates nor mind[s] are a self.

The reply is that when a meditator realizes selflessness he is realizing that a permanent self does not exist by itself,[29] not that the self identified with the aggregates or minds does not exist by itself. We may call this reply to the realization-of-selflessness objection *the permanent-self reply*.[30] In C130, Candrakīrti refers to this permanent self as "an inner agent," which strongly suggests that the self that is being said to be abandoned is the self asserted to exist by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas.[31] If this is correct, then the reply in question is not likely to be a reply that the Sāṃmitīyas would make to the realization-of-selflessness objection, since, like the Vaibhāṣikas and the original Sautrāntikas, they deny that this self is the self whose absence of independent existence is realized in meditation on the selflessness of persons. Consequently, I assume that Candrakīrti does not present this reply as a reply that the Sāṃmitīyas actually make. If this is so, the reply is included by Candrakīrti in order to show that it is not a reply that they could make to his realization-of-selflessness consequence.

Candrakīrti's first objection to the permanent-self reply is at 130d. It may be called the *no-sameness consequence* of the reply. The argument of the consequence is that if to realize that a self does not exist by itself is to realize that a permanent self does not exist by itself, then neither the aggregates nor minds are a self, since a self is a permanent self. Candrakīrti adds that if his opponents deny that they apply "self" to the aggregates when the no-self thesis is being

discussed, they abandon the sameness thesis. It is pointless to protest, he says, that when the lack of independent existence of a self is being discussed, "self" is not applied to the aggregates, since he has already established that it does not apply to the aggregates.

Verse 131

> ***According to you, when a meditator sees selflessness,***
> ***the way the aggregates are is not realized.***
> ***Because the aggregates are apprehended, mental afflictions***
> ***will arise, since there has been no realization of their intrinsic nature.***

In 131 Candrakīrti presents a second objection to the permanent-self reply. The objection, which may be called *the mental-afflictions objection*, is that if what meditators realize when they realize the selflessness of persons is that a permanent self does not exist by itself, then (i) when the selflessness of persons is seen, the selflessness of the aggregates is not seen; (ii) if the selflessness of the aggregates is not seen, the true intrinsic nature of the aggregates is not seen; and (iii) if the true intrinsic nature of the aggregates is not seen, the mental afflictions will arise. The implication is that (iv) the selflessness of persons has not been seen, since it cannot be seen unless the selflessness of the aggregates is seen.

The true intrinsic nature of the aggregates, according to Candrakīrti, is their selflessness. The mental afflictions arise if the selflessness of the aggregates is not seen, since conceiving a self and conceiving the aggregates are mutually dependent. This mutual dependency was taught by Nāgārjuna at *Precious Garland* 1.35, where he says that a self and the aggregates are conceived in dependence upon one another. To experience the absence of a self in the causal basis of its conception is also to experience the absence of the aggregates in the causal basis of their conception. How so?

The realization that a self does not exist by itself is said to include the realization that the aggregates do not exist by themselves because a self and the aggregates are conceived in dependence upon one another. If a self and the aggregates are conceived in dependence upon one another, the conceiving of the one cannot be abandoned without abandoning the conceiving of the other. How could the conceiving of a self, the agent that acquires the aggregates, be abandoned without abandoning the conceiving of the aggregates as the things it acquires? Without abandoning the conceiving of the aggregates as things a self acquires, we cannot abandon the conceiving of a self, and without abandoning the conceiving of a self, the mental afflictions arise.

The mental-afflictions objection is an objection to the permanent self reply to the realization-of-selflessness consequence of the sameness thesis. The Sāṃmitīyas do not think that a self and the aggregates are conceived in dependence upon one another or that conceiving a self is not eliminated unless conceiving the aggregates is eliminated. Since they do not believe that a conceiving of

the aggregates gives rise to the mental afflictions, they would reject the mental-afflictions objection Candrakīrti presents in 131.

The rejection of the mental-afflictions objection, however, would not concern Candrakīrti, since he thinks that the objection is based on the convention of the world that a self and the aggregates are conceived in dependence upon one another, not simply on his belief that this is so. So the mental-afflictions objection, he would say, shows that the permanent-self reply undermines the convention that an agent and object of acquisition are distinct.

In the commentary Candrakīrti uses an analogy to argue that meditators do not become free from suffering in saṃsāra by realizing that a permanent self does not exist among the aggregates. Because his exposition of the analogy is compressed, the exact meaning of the analogy is not clear. My interpretation of its meaning is based on the commentators' expositions. It is expressed by what I add in brackets to the translation. The first part of the analogy is that even if someone claims that there is a cuckoo bird on a kiñjalka flower, he does not become attached to the sweetness of the flower unless he has tasted its sweetness. In the same way, Candrakīrti thinks, even if someone claims that there is a permanent self among the aggregates, he does not become attached to the independent existence of the aggregates unless he has apprehended them as existing by themselves. The second part of the analogy is that even if we claim that there is no cuckoo bird on a kiñjalka flower, we become attached to the sweetness of the flower if we have tasted its sweetness. Likewise, even if we claim that there is no permanent self among the aggregates, we become attached to the independent existence of the aggregates if we have apprehended the aggregates as existing by themselves.

If the mental afflictions arise when the aggregates are conceived as things in themselves (i.e. as things that independently exist) and it is not realized that the aggregates do not exist in themselves, the realization that a permanent self is not present among the aggregates will not eliminate the mental afflictions. The mental afflictions that arise from the pursuit of what is pleasant do not arise because a permanent self present among the aggregates seeks pleasure, and the mental afflictions that arise from the avoidance of what is unpleasant do not arise because a permanent self present among the aggregates avoids what is painful. Since the mental afflictions arise when the aggregates are conceived, the conception of a self is not abandoned when the aggregates are conceived. Candrakīrti rhetorically asks: how can seeing that a permanent self does not exist be seeing that the object of the transient collection view does not exist if a permanent self is not the object of the transient collection view? A permanent self is not its object because we do not suffer in saṃsāra because we conceive ourselves as permanent selves. Candrakīrti concludes that this part of the Sāṃmitīyas' theory of persons is like the Tīrthikas theory because it does not lead to the abandonment of the mental afflictions.

. . .

In 132–3 Candrakīrti discusses the scriptural-support passage that was first cited in C126cd. He sets the stage for this discussion by introducing 132 with a thesis he says some Sāṃmitīyas assert. This is the thesis that the sameness thesis is to be accepted because it was asserted by the Buddha. In 132cd Candrakīrti says that the scriptural-support passage does not show that the Buddha believed that a collection of aggregates is a self. It does not show this, according to Candrakīrti, because the Buddha asserted that the thought of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates for the purpose of rejecting the thesis that a self is other than the aggregates, not for the purpose of identifying a self with a collection of aggregates. He also says that a sign that the Buddha asserted that the thought of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates for this purpose is that in other sutras he denied the truth of the sameness thesis according to its meaning that each of the aggregates is a self.

When Candrakīrti says that the Buddha's denial that each of the aggregates is a self contradicts the Sāṃmitīyas' sameness thesis he is assuming that they are committed to the thesis that each of the aggregates is a self because they believe that reference to something must be a reference to an object that exists by itself and that a collection of aggregates as a collection does not exist by itself.

Verse 132

If you say that the aggregates are a self
because the master said that they are a self,
[we reply that] he said so to deny that a self is other than the aggregates,
for in other sūtras he said that the aggregates are not a self.

If the Sāṃmitīyas should reply that in the scriptural-support passage the Buddha is saying that the aggregates are a self, Candrakīrti says that the Buddha said that the thought of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates to deny that a self is other than the aggregates, not to assert that the aggregates are a self, since in other sutras he denies that the aggregates are a self. In C132 Candrakīrti adds that in the scriptural-support passage the Buddha does not clearly assert, as a thesis he himself believes to be true, that the aggregates are a self. When the Buddha asserted that the thought of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates he did so "in order to set out a clear and unmistaken account of [a self as] a conventional reality." In other words, Candrakīrti is claiming that the Buddha was showing his disciples that a conventionally real self is not a self other than the aggregates because this self pertains to the aggregates in the sense that it is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. The implication is that when the Buddha refuted the unqualified existence of a conventionally real self he first argued that it is not other than the aggregates and then argued that it is not the same as the aggregates. So the first half of the

refutation of the independent existence of a self is simply the elimination of a self other than the aggregates as the self whose independent existence is to be refuted.

The thesis that the aggregates are a self might be taken to mean that a collection of aggregates as a collection is a self or to mean that each of the aggregates in the collection is a self. In 133 Candrakīrti says that the Buddha argues that the aggregates are not a self when he argues that each of the aggregates is a self. In 134 he argues that what is meant when it is said that the aggregates are a self is that a collection of aggregates as a collection is a self and that a person-property self cannot be a collection of aggregates, since a collection of aggregates cannot possess person-properties.

Verse 133

In other sūtras he said that neither bodily forms,
feeling, discrimination, motivating dispositions,
nor consciousness are a self.
In brief, he did not mean that the aggregates are a self.

Candrakīrti in 133 tells us in what way the Buddha himself explicitly denied that the aggregates are a self. The Buddha denied this, according to Candrakīrti, by denying that each of the aggregates is a self when he was refuting the independent existence of a dependently conceived self that possesses the aggregates. Candrakīrti believes that this is the only way in which the Buddha himself denied that a self is the aggregates. That the Buddha explicitly denied that each of the aggregates is a self rather than that a collection of aggregates as a collection is a self is no doubt why the Sāṃmitīyas believed they could assert that he meant to assert the sameness thesis.

A self that possesses the aggregates is a person-property self, since a self is a person-property self if and only if it possesses the aggregates. In C133 Candrakīrti adds that when the Buddha said that the thought of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates, he said it to deny the existence of a self that is other than the aggregates. The meaning is that the Buddha rejected the existence of a self other than the aggregates by pointing out that thought of a self pertains to the aggregates in the sense that a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. This is how the Buddha set out a clear and unmistaken account of (a self as) a conventional reality.

When the existence of a self that is other than the aggregates was denied by the Buddha, Candrakīrti says, he was discussing the realization of the way things are. This discussion begins by the Buddha setting out a clear and unmistaken account of a self as a conventional reality, since it needs to be shown that it is a conventionally real self whose absence of independent existence is to be realized. When it is said that the Buddha was discussing the realization of the way things are the implication is that the Buddha was discussing a self from the point

of view of whether or not it exists by itself. Candrakīrti concludes that since the aggregates do not exist unless a self is perceived, and a self is not perceived (since it does not exist by itself), attachment to the aggregates is to be abandoned along with attachment to a self.

Verse 134ab

When it is said that the aggregates are a self, what is meant is a collection of aggregates, not the aggregates themselves.

In his introduction to this verse Candrakīrti refers to the scriptural-support passage and admits, for the sake of argument, that what is meant, when he said that the thought of a self pertains only is a collection of aggregates, is that the aggregates are a self. But to say that the aggregates are a self, Candrakīrti says, is like saying that trees are a forest. He claims that to say that trees are a forest is not to say that the trees themselves are a forest, since each tree would then be said to be a forest. The trees are said to be a forest because a collection of trees is a forest, not because each of the trees in the collection is a forest. Likewise, he concludes, if the aggregates are said to be a self it is said because it is thought that a collection of aggregates is a self, not because it is thought that each of the aggregates in the collection is a self.

But in 134ab Candrakīrti is not clarifying what the Buddha meant when he said that the thought of a self pertains only to the aggregates, since he does not think that what the Buddha meant is that a collection of aggregates is a self. Candrakīrti implies that should the Buddha have meant to say that a collection of aggregates is a self he would have said that a collection of aggregates is a self, not that the thought of a self pertains to the aggregates. In 134ab Candrakīrti is clarifying what is meant by saying that a collection of aggregates is a self so that in 134cd he can introduce an objection to the sameness thesis so interpreted. So interpreted, Candrakīrti apparently believes, the sameness thesis is that a collection of aggregates is a person-property self. But can a collection of aggregates be a person-property self?

Verse 134cd

It is not a protector, controller, or witness.
A collection [of aggregates] is not a self, since it does not exist.

Verse 134cd is an argument against the sameness thesis construed as the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a person-property self. The argument is that a collection of aggregates is not a person-property self because a collection of aggregates as a collection does not exist by itself and that for this reason the Sāṃmitīyas cannot say that a collection of aggregates possesses the person-properties of being a protector, controller, or witness.

We need not assume that Candrakīrti thinks that the Sāṃmitīyas themselves put forward this version of the sameness thesis unless its sameness consists in the conception of a person-property self having only a collection of aggregates as its object. The argument is simply that the Sāṃmitīyas cannot say that a collection of aggregates is a person-property self because a collection of aggregates does not exist by itself and what does not exist by itself, according to the Sāṃmitīyas themselves, cannot possesses the person-properties of being a protector, controller, or witness. Since the argument is based on the claim that a collection of aggregates does not possess person-properties I call this ninth consequence that Candrakīrti draws from the sameness thesis *the no-person-property consequence*.

The two lines of 134cd suggest that Candrakīrti may be presenting two consequences rather than one, since there is no "since" or "because" or anything of this sort connecting 134c and 134d.[32] But Candrakīrti's introduction to 134cd shows that the denial of the existence of a collection of aggregates in 134d is meant to state the reason why a collection of aggregates is said not to be a protector, controller, or witness. The implication is that if the sameness thesis is a thesis about a person-property self, it is inconsistent with the Sāṃmitīyas' thesis that the conception of an object refers to an object that exists by its own nature or refers to nothing at all. Candrakīrti shows that a person-property self not existing means that it does not exist by its own nature, since in C134cd he replaces "does not exist" with "is not substantially real," which he believes is equivalent to "does not exist by its own nature."

In 134 Candrakīrti implies that the Sāṃmitīyas cannot consistently claim that the sameness thesis is a thesis about a person-property self, since the collection of aggregates in dependence upon which a person-property self is conceived does not exist by itself.

In C134cd Candrakīrti quotes passages from scripture in which it is said that a self is a protector, controller, and witness. Since a collection of aggregates does not exist by itself, the Sāṃmitīyas cannot say that it is a protector, controller, or witness, and if it is not a protector, controller, or witness, they cannot even say that the sameness thesis concerns a person-property self in the sense that reference to a person-property self is a reference to a collection of aggregates.

. . .

In the comment Candrakīrti places before 135ab he presents and rejects a reply someone might present to the no-person-properties consequence. The reply is that even though a collection of aggregates as a collection is not a possessor of person-properties, it is a possessor of person-properties by virtue of not being other than a possessor of person-properties. In his introductory comment Candrakīrti objects that the reply fails to deal with the objection to which it is a reply, which is that a collection of aggregates does not possess person-properties because it does not exist by itself. The point of this first objection in the introductory comment is that even if a collection of aggregates is not other than a

possessor of aggregates, it is not a possessor of aggregates because it does not exist by itself.

Verse 135ab

In that case the collection of the parts of a chariot would be the chariot itself. A chariot and a self are similar in this respect.

In 135ab Candrakīrti presents a tenth consequence of the sameness thesis. It may be called *the chariot-analogy consequence* because it takes the form of an argument by analogy to a chariot. The analogy is based on the assumption that a self is related to a collection of aggregates in the same way a chariot is related to the collection of its parts. The use of the analogy to a chariot is justified in C135ab by a passage in scripture in which the analogy occurs. I call it the chariot-analogy passage.

The chariot-analogy consequence is based on the argument that if a collection of aggregates is a self, a collection of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, and since a collection of the parts of a chariot is not a chariot, the collection of aggregates is not a self. The parts of a chariot are parts of a whole that is called a chariot, and so they are conceived as parts in dependence upon the whole of which they are parts being conceived as the whole of which they are parts. The collection of these parts, such as the wheels, axle, and pins of a chariot, is not the same as the whole of which they are the parts, since the parts are conceived in dependence upon the conception of the whole. In 135cd Candrakīrti points out that the collection of the parts of a whole is not the same as the whole of which they are parts, since what is dependently conceived is not the same as that in dependence upon which it is conceived.

In the chariot-analogy passage, the relation of a self to the aggregates is likened to the relation of a chariot to its parts. Candrakīrti does not add a commentary to 135ab because he will challenge the chariot-analogy in 151–62, where he argues that even though a self does not exist by itself, it exists in dependence upon the collection of its acquired parts, just as a chariot does.

Verse 135cd

Since in a sūtra it is said that a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates,
a mere collection of aggregates is not a self.

This is not a statement of a consequence of the sameness thesis. It is an objection to the sameness thesis based on the scriptural thesis that a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates. We may call the objection to the sameness thesis *the dependent-existence objection*, since it is based on the argument that a collection

of aggregates is not a self, since in scripture it is said that a self exists in dependence upon a collection of aggregates. In C134cd "a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates" is used to gloss "a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates," since the dependent existence of a self is its dependent conceptualization. The implication is that a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates because it is conceived in dependence upon a collection of aggregates. A self is conceived in dependence upon a collection of aggregates because a self is a whole of which the aggregates in the collection are parts.

Candrakīrti's dependent existence objection to the sameness thesis is based on his rejection the causal reference principle. This is the principle that the object of a conception is always the causal basis of its conception.[33] In its application to a self, the principle is an assumption made about what is true about the object of the conception of a self. It is claimed that a collection of aggregates is the object of the conception of a self because it is assumed that the causal basis of the conception of a self is its object and that the causal basis of the conception is a collection of aggregates.

In C135cd Candrakīrti explains his rejection of the causal reference principle in the case of a self by citing counter-examples to the causal reference principle in other cases. He says that sense-objects and sense-organs are not the same as the collections of elements in dependence upon which they are conceived, and that in the same way a self, which is conceived in dependence upon a collection of aggregates, is not the same as a collection of aggregates.

To show that a collection of aggregates is not a self Candrakīrti says that the defining property of a self is that it is conceived in dependence upon a collection of aggregates. Because the Buddha established the conventional existence of a self as an agent that acquires the aggregates as parts, it cannot be the same as a collection of aggregates, since a collection of aggregates cannot, as a self can, be an acquirer of a collection of aggregates. Although a self is an agent that acquires a collection of aggregates, the acquisition of the aggregates is not a person-property, since it is only in dependence upon acquiring a collection of aggregates that a self is a possessor of person-properties.

Verse 136

If it is said to be a configuration,
then because a configuration is possessed by bodily forms,[34]
these [bodily forms] you would call a self,
and the collection of mental aggregates would not be a self,
since they do not possess a configuration.

Since the Sāṃmitīyas' analysis of a chariot into the collection of its parts does not distinguish a collection of the parts of a chariot that is a chariot from a collection that is not a chariot, what needs to be added to this analysis that will enable them to say which of the two collections is the actual chariot is how the

aggregates in the collection are configured. We do not know whether or not the Sāṃmitīyas ever said that a chariot is a configuration of the parts of a chariot. But in response to this question, Candrakīrti suggests, they might say that the parts of a chariot are assembled so that they exist in the configuration that the parts of a chariot would possess. Therefore, Candrakīrti has them suggest that a configuration of its parts is the chariot. By analogy, they would then say, a configuration of the aggregates is a self.

In 136 Candrakīrti objects that if a configuration of its aggregates is a self, there are no mental aggregates in the collection of aggregates, though the Sāṃmitīyas include them in the collection. Since he assumes that the use of the analogy to a configuration of the parts of a chariot requires that a configuration of the aggregates of a self be an exact analogue to this configuration, he thinks that the exact analogue is a configuration of material parts. The Sāṃmitīyas might have been made by Candrakīrti to reply that the analogy is not meant to be exact, but he does not have them make this reply. Since the commentators do not explain why an exchange about the exactness of the analogy does not occur, it is likely that it is presupposed that when analogies are used in a debate, they need to be exact.

In 137 Candrakīrti presents an eleventh consequence of the sameness thesis. In this case, the self mentioned in the sameness thesis is assumed to be without person-properties. The consequence may be called *the agent-object consequence*.

Verse 137ab

It is illogical to suppose that an acquirer and what it acquires are one thing,
since an agent of action and object of action would be one thing.

If the aggregates are a self without person-properties, the agent that acquires aggregates is the aggregates it acquires, which is absurd. An acquirer of the aggregates is an agent of the action of acquiring the aggregates, and aggregates are the object of its action. Candrakīrti assumes (i) that a self without person-properties is a self conceived in dependence upon aggregates because it needs to acquire aggregates as parts if person-properties are to be ascribed to it and (ii) that the convention, that nothing can acquire itself, cannot be undermined.

The term Candrakīrti uses in 137b to refer to an agent is *byed po* (*kāraka*) and the term he uses there to refer to its object is *las* (*karma*). In this case the agent and object of action are grammatical notions. Although *byed po* (*kāraka*) is sometimes used to refer to an agent that is a person-property self, in 137b it is used to refer to an agent that is the subject of a sentence to which an active transitive verb is attached. Similarly, although the term, *las* (*karma*), is sometimes used to refer to an action of a person-property self, in 137b it is used to refer to

the object of an active transitive verb attached to the subject of a sentence. Candrakīrti believes that the notions of an agent of action, an action, and an object of action (when action has an object) exist in dependence upon one another, both as grammatical notions and as non-grammatical notions. In 137b he is using grammatical categories, as the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas do, to explain the distinctions we draw between things. But he believes that the distinctions are interdependently conceived, and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas believe that they represent real differences in a world of things in themselves. Hence, when in 137a Candrakīrti refers to a self as an acquirer of aggregates, he is using the conception of an acquirer of aggregates as a grammatical notion. The idea is that the subject of a sentence to which an active transitive verb is attached acquires an object of the active transitive verb.

To support the argument, that a self is not the aggregates because an agent and object of action cannot be one, Candrakīrti cites *Treatise* 10.1ab. In *Treatise* 10, Nāgārjuna argues that fire and fuel, as agent and object of action, respectively, do not exist by themselves, since an agent of action is neither the same as nor other than the object upon which it acts. The point is that since fire is by definition what burns fuel and fuel is by definition what is burned by fire, neither exists independently. In *Treatise* 10.1 he argues that fire and fuel are not the same, since it is absurd that an agent acting on an object and the object upon which it acts should be same, and that they are not other than one another, since there can be no fire without fuel. Therefore, if fire and fuel each exists by itself, fire is not an agent that causes fuel to burn, and fuel is not what is caused to burn by fire.

Candrakīrti's commentary on *Treatise* 10.1 may be translated as follows:

Clear Words 10.1

> Suppose that the following be said. "It is not true that just as agent and object of action do not possess a svabhāva,[35] neither do acquirer and what is acquired. For even things that dependently exist are seen to possess a svabhāva. For fire exists in dependence upon fuel, but is not without a svabhāva because it has effects that possess a svabhāva, such as the capacity to warm or burn. Likewise, fuel exists in dependence upon fire, but is not without a svabhāva, since the four great elements [of which it is composed] possess a svabhāva. In the same way, an acquirer will possess a svabhāva in dependence upon what it acquires, and what it acquires [will possess a svabhāva] in dependence upon the acquirer; these two, acquirer and acquisition, will be like fire and fuel." So it is said.
>
> If fire and fuel exist, this would be true; but they do not. Why? If in this case, fire and fuel exist, then surely they would exist either as one thing or as other than one another. Either way, this is not correct. So he says [*Treatise* 10.1]:

> *If fire is fuel,*
> *agent and object of action are one.*
> *If fire is other than fuel,*
> *then it should exist without fuel.*

> In this verse, what is ignited is fuel, which is a combustible material such as wooden sticks. The agent of its combustion is fire. So if it is thought that fire is fuel, agent and object of action would be one thing. But this is not seen [to be so] because of the consequence that a pot and a potter and a woodcutter and what he cuts would be one, and because this is not generally believed to be so.
>
> Now otherness is indeed the same: if fire is other than fuel, then fire should occur without fuel. Although a cloth, which is other than a pot, is seen to exist apart from that, it is not correct to say, in the same way, that fire is seen that exists apart from fuel.[36]

Treatise 10.1 is Nāgārjuna's reply to an objection to his thesis that an acquirer and what is acquired do not exist by themselves because they exist in dependence upon one another. The objection is that even though fire arises in dependence upon fuel, fire exists by itself, since it produces an effect in fuel. Likewise, even though fuel is conceived in dependence upon fire, it exists by itself without dependence upon fire, since it is composed of the four great elemental substances. In the same way, although the acquirer and acquired arise in dependence upon one another, each exists by itself. Nāgārjuna replies that if fire and fuel were to exist independently, they would be either the same as one another, which his opponents deny, or they would be other than one another in the way cloth and a pot are other than one another, which his opponents also deny. The test of fire existing by itself is of the same sort as the test of a self existing by itself.

Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 10.15 in support of 137ab. Nāgārjuna argues in the verse that a self and its aggregates, like fire and fuel, do not exist independently because they are conceived in dependence upon one another. Candrakīrti's commentary on this verse in *Clear Words* is translated below. The meanings of the more obscure sentences in the quotation are explained with the help of words inserted in brackets or in notes to the translation. Candrakīrti says:

Clear Words 10.15

> In the same way that fire, when examined in the five ways, is [shown to be] without existence, so also is a self [shown to be without existence]. Explaining this he says:
>
> *Every relation between a self*
> *and [its] acquisitions*
> *is fully explained by reference to fire and fuel.*

Acquisitions are things acquired. These are the five acquired aggregates. When the acquisitions are conceived, what acquires them and conceives them and brings them into existence is called a self. Since a self is the object of the conception of a self, the conception of a self that arises is implied by this [conception of its acquisitions]. Every relation that establishes [the mutual dependency of] a self and [its] acquisitions is explained, i.e. is fully understood, by reference to fire and fuel.

How do [the words] "every" and "fully" differ in meaning? The use of "every" indicates the sequential relation of the five theses.[37] Each and every one of the five theses concerning a self and [its] acquisitions should be brought up [in the examination], just as [they were in the examination of] fire and fuel. The argument for the [mutual dependency] relation [between them] was presented earlier in the exposition [of the five theses]. The refutation of the existence of a self and [its] acquisitions should be understood "fully" from that [argument]. It is to be known that the same refutation applies to a self and its acquisitions as applies to fire and fuel.[38] So, to provide clarity, he says "every" and "fully."

It is not true that the acquisitions are a self, since the consequence is that agent and object of action would be one. Nor are its acquisitions one thing and the acquirer another, since the consequence is that a self would be perceived as different from the aggregates.[39] Hence, there is the consequence that it [a self] would arise from something unrelated [to it].

Since sameness and otherness have been refuted, a self does not possess the aggregates. Because they are not other [than one another], the aggregates are not present in a self, nor is a self present in the aggregates.[40] Since a self does not exist in any of the five ways, it follows that, like an agent and an object of action, there is a proof that a self and its acquisitions are mutually dependent. This is certain.

The relation between a self and its acquisitions is [applicable] not only to these two, since [he adds in *Treatise* 15d],

> *along with pots, cloth, and other such things.*

It is to be understood from this statement [that] all things without exception [are included]. "Pots, [cloth], and other such things" include cause and effect, parts and possessor of parts, defining properties and what is defined, and properties and possessor of properties. In this case, the clay, stick, wheel, string, water, the efforts of the potter, and so forth, are the cause of a pot, while a pot is their effect. Things like the lid of a pot and the blue dye are the parts, while a pot is what possesses parts. The defining properties are a wide bottom, a lip, a long neck and so on, while a pot is what is being defined. The properties are a black

> color and so on, while a pot is the possessor of properties. So, when this has been understood, it is correct [to say] that the relation [between a self and its acquisitions] is like [the relation between] fire and fuel. The explanation of these things, such as pots and a self and their acquisitions, is to be understood from the discussion in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*.

This commentary clearly shows that Candrakīrti understands the relation between a self and the aggregates as dependent co-existence. It explains what Candrakīrti means when he says in C137 that "the consequence would be that the elements and both the bodily forms that arise from them and things such as pots and potters would be one and the same."

An implication of *Clear Words* 10.15 is that the proof that a self does not exist by itself shows that the aggregates do not exist by themselves, since the aggregates do not exist unless a self does. In 157 and 161 Candrakīrti says that the parts of an object do not exist by themselves if the object itself does not, and by implication, that the aggregates of a self do not exist by themselves if a self does not. He does not include in the Commentary a separate proof that the aggregates do not exist by themselves because his stated purpose is to refute the independent existence of the object of the transient collection view.

Candrakīrti's commentaries on *Treatise* 10.1 and 10.15, which are quoted above, also show the difference between his use of the analogy to fire and fuel and the use to which the Pudgalavādins are put in Vasubandhu's "Refutation" to make the analogy.[41] The Pudgalavādins are made to argue that just as fire is conceived in reliance upon fuel and is not other than or the same as fuel, so a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates without being other than the aggregates or the same as the aggregates. Unlike Candrakīrti, they believe that a self exists by itself without being either other than the aggregates or the same as the aggregates. Like Vasubandhu and unlike Candrakīrti the Pudgalavādins deny that a self and the aggregates dependently co-exist.

Verse 137cd

> ***If it is thought that an object of action exists without an agent of action,***
> ***it is not so, since an object of action does not exist without an agent of action.***

In 137c Candrakīrti makes reference to an objection that might be made to his argument that the aggregates are not a self because the object and agent of action cannot be one. The objection is that an object of action can exist without an agent of action. The unstated but obvious argument for the objection is that an object of action is perceived in the causal basis of the conception of an agent of action, but an agent of action is not.

In 137d Candrakīrti replies to the objection. His reply is the simple denial that an object being acted upon can exist without an agent acting upon it. The denial expresses his belief that the objection contradicts the well-established convention of discourse and thought that agent and object of action are not one. In C137cd Candrakīrti implies that an agent of action is a cause of an object of action. What he seems to mean is that an object of action exists in dependence upon an agent of action, which in C135cd he implies is for the object of action to be conceived in dependence upon an agent of action. So it is clear that he believes that an object of action is also a cause of an agent of action.

In C137cd Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 8.13 in support of the thesis that an object of action cannot exist unless an agent of action exists. The verse quoted does not, at first, seem to support this thesis, since in the verse reference is made to an agent of action and an action, not to an agent of action and an object of action. To see how the verse is relevant let us examine Candrakīrti's commentary on the verse, which is here quoted in full.

Clear Words 18.13

> Since there is proof that agent of action and action are mutually dependent [for their existence], for this reason, in order to explain [that it is true] for other things as well, he says:
>
> *In this way, acquisition is to be explained,*
> *since agent of action and action have been eliminated, and so forth.*
>
> "In this way" indicates [an explanation of] the aforementioned conceptions of agent of action and action. "Acquisition" means "the state of acquiring." By this he means the activity of acquiring. This [activity] and its completion indicate that an agent of action is the acquirer, and an action is acquisition. These two – the acquirer and acquisition – which are mutually dependent, are proof that, like agent of action and action, they do not possess a svabhāva.[42] But why do they not possess a svabhāva? He says:
>
> *since agent of action and action have been eliminated, and so forth.*
>
> The expression, "and so forth," indicates the reason. To be eliminated is to be abandoned. So we arrive at this meaning: we said that action is to be eliminated for certain reasons, and for those same reasons we know that there is a refutation of [the existence of] acquirer and acquisition.

But it should be understood through the refutation [of the existence] of agent of action and action that not only of these two is there a proof of mutual dependence, for [he says that]

Through [the explanation of] agent of action and action
one is to explain the remaining things.

The subject of the sentence ["one"] is an intelligent person. Those things that are other than an agent of action and action and an acquirer and acquisition are: a producer and what is produced, a mover and what is moved, seeing and what is seen, defining properties and what is defined by them, what causes arising and what arises, as well as such things as a possessor of parts and its parts, properties and what possesses properties, and an instrument of knowledge and an object of knowledge. There are [an] endless [number of such] things. Having refuted the svabhāva-based existence of these [things] by an investigation of agent of action and action, the intelligent person who seeks nirvāṇa should understand that a mutual dependence is established in order to gain release from birth, old age, death and other bonds. The lengthy investigation of [all of] these [things] is to be understood through [a study of] the *Introduction to the Middle Way*.

How does what Candrakīrti say in this commentary support his claim that an object of action does not exist without an agent of action? For in the commentary on *Treatise* 18.13, he does not argue that an object of action does not exist without an agent of action. The answer to this question lies in his comment that the same explanation of agent and action he has given applies to "the remaining things." Just as agent of agent and action are mutually dependent, so are agent of action and object of action. Candrakīrti believes, of course, that agent of action, action, and object of action are conceived in dependence upon one another if an action has an object. Since to be a self is to be an agent of the action of acquiring aggregates, and to be the aggregates is to be what a self acquires, the aggregates do not exist apart from a self that acquires them.

In C137cd Candrakīrti also explains the Sanskrit grammatical basis of the claim that the acquirer, acquiring, and the acquired dependently co-exist. He calls upon a passage from Paṇiṇi's treatise on Sanskrit grammar to argue that the acquirer, acquiring, and the acquired exist in dependence upon one another. What the quotation from Paṇiṇi's treatise on Sanskrit grammar shows is that the agent and object of acquisition exist in dependence upon one another because the agent's action is that of acquiring what is acquired. I have translated the passage in a way that reproduces its meaning in English grammar so that readers may more easily see the point of the explanation.

But do the Abhidharmikas think that the aggregates are by definition what are acquired by a self and that there is no self that acquires them? In the

"Refutation" Vasubandhu denies that to be the aggregates is to be things acquired by a self, since there is no self that acquires them. So it seems that Candrakīrti cannot attribute to the Abhidharmikas the absurd view that a self, as an agent of the action of acquiring aggregates, does not exist by itself, but the aggregates, as objects of its action of acquiring them, do exist by themselves. Candrakīrti assumes that even if those who assert the sameness thesis do not realize that the aggregates are by convention the things acquired by a self, they are the things acquired by a self. It follows that their thesis, that the aggregates exist independently and a self does not, is to be judged on the basis of what the terms in the thesis mean, not on the basis of their own ideas about their meaning.

To support the thesis, that an object of action cannot exist without an agent of action, Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.8. In this verse, Nāgārjuna is rejecting erroneous views concerning a self. The verse and Candrakīrti's commentary upon the verse are as follows.

Clear Words 27.8

To summarize the meaning presented up to this point, he says:

So a self is not other than what it acquires
and yet is not what is acquired;
nor does it exist without what is acquired.

It must be [that a self is not what is acquired] if a self does not possess the form[43] of what it acquires, since a consequence is that what is acquired and what acquires it would be one, and since a consequence is that it would come to be and pass away [as a different self from moment to moment].[44] A self is also not other [than what it acquires] because, being without acquisitions, there is the consequence that it is conceived by reason of being other [than its acquisitions, which is absurd]. Nor [does it exist] without what is acquired, since there is the consequence that something [that acquires] is conceived that exists apart from what is acquired. Therefore, a self does not exist. This must be so.

It is [then] said that

It is certainly not without existence.

How can what is conceived on the basis of the aggregates acquired not exist? Although a self not conceived on the basis of the aggregates acquired does not exist, [like] the son of a barren woman, how can it be correct that what is acquired exists and an acquirer does not? Therefore, it is not correct [to say] that a self does not exist. Therefore, [to say,] "It certainly does not exist," is not correct. The status of that self is explained at length in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*.[45]

The part of Candrakīrti's commentary on *Treatise* 27.8 relevant to his claim in 137cd is his explication of the claim that a self is not what is acquired. He says that "a consequence is that what is acquired and what acquires it would be one." The more general point of *Treatise* 27.8 is that a self exists in dependence upon a collection of aggregates, since it is an agent of action and the aggregates are the objects upon which it acts. Candrakīrti concludes this part of C137 by saying that "it should be known that without an agent of action an object of action does not exist."

From the *Sūtra on Ultimate Emptiness* Candrakīrti quotes a sentence in which it is said that no agent of action is perceived, but objects of action and results of action exist. He does this to support his claim that the Buddha's refutation of the existence of an agent of action is a refutation of its existence "with a svabhāva of its own." If this sentence is actually to support Candrakīrti's belief that an agent of action does not exist by itself, to say that an agent of action is not perceived is to say it is not perceived when we look for it in the causal basis of its conception. But is it not implied that the objects of action and results of action are said in this passage to exist independently when it is said that they exist?

In the "Refutation" Vasubandhu uses this same quotation from the *Sūtra on Ultimate Emptiness* to support the thesis that even though a self does not exist by itself, the aggregates exist by themselves.[46] It is true, of course, that in the passage it is not explicitly said that the objects and results of action exist by themselves. But if Candrakīrti's use of the passage is to support his view, he needs to explain the ontological status of the objects and results of action, since Vasubandhu's interpretation of the passage seems to be its more natural interpretation. Candrakīrti's use of this sentence and his use of the next sentence are good examples of how quotations from scripture are used by the Indian Buddhist philosophers. The quotations seldom unequivocally support the claims they are used to support.

Candrakīrti then quotes a sentence from scripture to show that the Buddha did not think that an agent not existing by itself implies that it does not exist at all. In the sentence quoted, the Buddha says that a person afflicted by ignorance performs meritorious actions. So the Buddha uses the conception of a person-property self in spite of having denied that a person-property self exists by itself. Since the Buddha would not have said that an agent of actions performs meritorious actions unless it in some way exists, and it does not exist by its own nature, it must exist by convention, just as the objects and the results of action do. Candrakīrti says that this sentence shows us that "it should not be thought that the existence of a dependently conceived thing that is part of convention is being refuted." When he calls the existence of a dependently conceived thing "a part of convention," he is referring to conventional existence.

Verse 138

Since the Muni carefully demonstrated that a self exists in dependence
upon the six elements, which are earth, water, fire, air, mind, and space,
and in dependence upon the organs of perception,
which are the six bases of contact,

Verse 139

and since he spoke of it in dependence upon
minds and mental factors, it is not the same as these things,
each individually, or only as a collection.
So the conception of a self does not pertain to them.

Here Candrakīrti repeats and expands upon the dependent existence objection presented in 135cd. The dependent existence objection is that the sameness thesis is inconsistent with the Buddha's teaching that a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates. The expansion of the objection consists both in explaining the aggregates in dependence upon which a self is conceived as the six elements, the six organs of perception, and minds and mental factors, and in adding that a self is not the same as the aggregates individually considered or as a collection.

When Candrakīrti says that the aggregates, "individually, or only as a collection," are not a self, he shows, I believe, that he has been objecting to the sameness thesis according to both of its interpretations. He may also be assuming that the most basic reason that the sameness thesis is false is that a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates. The dependent existence objection calls attention to the Madhyamaka view that one form of dependent existence is existence in dependence upon being conceived in relation to something else. A self can be conceived even though it does not exist by itself because it is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates.

When in 139d Candrakīrti says that the conception of a self does not "pertain" to the aggregates, he uses the same word he quoted the Sāṃmitīyas having used to convey the idea that a collection of aggregates is a self. But now when he says that the conception of a self does not pertain to these things, he means that the object conceived is not the aggregates, since the phenomena mentioned in the verses, with the possible exception of space,[47] are in the causal basis of the conception of a self. Although space is not usually included among the aggregates, Tsongkhapa suggests that the space included is the space "such as cavities in nose, and so forth,"[48] which would then be, technically, part of the causal basis of the conception of a self.

Candrakīrti also quotes a passage from the *Sūtra on the Meeting of Father and Son* (*Pitaputrasamagama Sūtra*). The passage is the basis for what he says

in 138 and 139. His accounts of the six elements, the six organs of perception, and the eighteen activities of the mental organ are explanations both of the passage quoted and of 138–9.

In Candrakīrti's final remarks in C138–9 he states the conclusion of the argument presented in 121–37. A self does not exist by itself, he concludes, because it is not other than the aggregates or the same as the aggregates. When he adds that nothing belongs to an independently existing self because it does not independently exist, he includes the aggregates among the things that belong to a self, since he believes that the aggregates do not exist if a self does not. The aggregates are either the things acquired by a self without person-properties or things possessed by a person-property self. He then says that "when the existence of all causally conditioned things has been refuted, a nirvāṇa free from acquisitions is obtained." What he seems to mean is that when the independent existence of all things other than a self is refuted, a nirvāṇa free from acquisitions is obtained. A nirvāṇa free of acquisitions is parinirvāṇa, which is the nirvāṇa of a Buddha after he dies.

Verse 140

"A permanent self is abandoned when selflessness is realized."
But the thesis that it is the support of the conception of a self is not accepted.
So it is quite a fine thing for you to say that the mistaken view of a self
is also eliminated by the knowledge of selflessness.

In his introduction to this verse Candrakīrti says that if the object of the conception of a self is the aggregates or minds, the conception of a self arises when the aggregates or minds arise, since it is then the support or object of the conception of a self. The implication is that if conceiving a self is conceiving the aggregates or minds, what is to be realized on the path of insight is the absence of the independent existence of aggregates or minds. This is a slightly different form of the realization-of-selflessness consequence that was set out in 130ab. In 140a the reply is made, as it was in 130c, that it is a permanent self that is abandoned when the selflessness of persons is realized.

Candrakīrti does not explain why he returns to the permanent-self reply to his realization-of-selflessness consequence. His reason may be the great danger he thinks that the reply poses to the chances of obtaining nirvāṇa. If the object to be negated when selflessness is realized is misidentified, the meditation will fail to achieve its aim. If in meditation one tries to abandon the transient collection view by realizing that a permanent self does not exist by itself, meditators cannot free themselves from suffering in saṃsāra because a permanent self is not the object of the transient collection view.

In 140b Candrakīrti calls attention to the incongruity of the permanent-self reply to the realization-of-selflessness consequence. The incongruity is that it

contradicts the thesis that the aggregates or minds are the object or support of the conception of a self, since this object or support is the object whose lack of independent existence needs to be realized if freedom from suffering in saṃsāra is to be achieved. In 140cd Candrakīrti shames those who would say that the mistaken view of a self can be abandoned by the realization that a permanent self does not exist by itself. He says that since they do not think that the object of the conception of a self is a permanent self, it would be silly to claim that the independent existence of a permanent self is abandoned when the selflessness of a self is realized. The use of "you" in 140c to address the opponents may be addressed to anyone, not just the Sāṃmitīyas, who would assert that a permanent self is abandoned on the path of insight.

Verse 141

When you see a snake is in a hole in the wall of your house,
you say that no elephant is there
and your fear of the snake is also abandoned,
oh my, what fun others will make of this!

After having in 140 called attention to the incongruity of the permanent-self reply to the realization-of-selflessness consequence, in this verse Candrakīrti uses an analogy to emphasize the absurdity of combining the thesis that the object of the mistaken view of a self is the aggregates with the thesis that conceiving a self can be abandoned by the realization that a permanent self does not exist by itself. Those who believe this are like persons who believe that they see a snake in a hole in the wall of their house and think that their fear of the snake will go away when they realize that there is no elephant in the hole. The point is that the realization that there is no elephant there is irrelevant to the danger posed by the snake. The snake is the conception of a self and fear of this snake is fear of its bite, the suffering of saṃsāra. Denying that there is an elephant in the hole is not denying the existence of the snake. To confuse the snake with an elephant is to confuse the conception of a self with the conception of a permanent self.

. . .

Candrakīrti has argued in 121–41 that since a self is neither other than the aggregates nor the same as the aggregates individually considered or as a collection, it does not exist independently. In 142 he will argue that it follows from his argument that a self is not present in the aggregates and is not that in which the aggregates are present, since what is present in something is other than it. In 143 he will argue that it follows that a self does not possess the aggregates, since what possesses the aggregates is either other than or the same as the aggregates and a self is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates. In 144 he says that his argument reveals what he calls "the twenty forms of the mistaken view

of a self," and in 145 he says that the realization of the selflessness of persons, which he implies comes about by the internalization of the argument he has presented, destroys the mountain that is the transient collection view, along with its peaks, which are the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self. In C145 he calls attention to the initial result of the realization of the selflessness of persons.

Verse 142

A self is not present in the aggregates,
nor are the aggregates present in a self. For in this case,
if they were other than one another, these ideas would be correct
but since they are not other than one another, these ideas are not correct.

The argument is that since (i) if a self is present in the aggregates, it is by convention other than the aggregates and (ii) if a self is that in which the aggregates are present, it is by convention other than the aggregates, and (iii) Candrakīrti has already shown that a self is not other than the aggregates, it follows that (iv) a self is not present in the aggregates and that (v) a self is not that in which the aggregates are present. In C142 Candrakīrti supports the claim that it is true by convention that what is present in something is other than it by citing the example of curds present in a metal bowl being other than the metal bowl.

Candrakīrti is not saying that it is wrong to think or say, for instance, as we sometimes do, that we are present in our bodies or that we are that in which our mental states are present. He wants us to realize that an analysis of a self shows that there is no independently existent self that can stand in any of these relations to the aggregates.

Verse 143

It is not said that a self possesses a bodily form,
since a self that does not exist cannot possess anything.
One who possesses a cow is other than it, but one who possesses a bodily form is not.
But a self and a bodily form are neither other nor the same.

In 143ab Candrakīrti says that a self does not possess a bodily form because it does not exist by itself. Possession, he says, is possession of what is other or not other than the possessor. An example of the first is a man possessing a cow, which is other than the man in the way cloth is other than a pot. An example of the second is a man possessing bodily form, which is not other than the man since a man is conceived in dependence upon bodily form. Candrakīrti has already shown that a self and its bodily form are neither other nor not other than one another; therefore, a self does not possess bodily form either as something

other than itself or as something not other than itself. What is true of bodily form, of course, is also true of all the aggregates. Since a self and the aggregates are neither other than one another nor not other than one another, there is no independently existing self that possesses the aggregates.

Candrakīrti uses the example of Devadatta possessing a cow to illustrate a self possessing something other than itself. The example of Devadatta possessing bodily form is used to illustrate a self possessing something that it is not other than itself. Devadatta, of course, can be said, from a conventional point of view, to possess a cow and to possess bodily form. As something independently existent, however, Devadatta possesses neither a cow nor bodily form, since an independently existing Devadatta does not exist.

Verse 144

Bodily form is not a self. A self does not possess bodily form.
A self is not present in bodily form, nor is bodily form present in a self.
One should understand all aggregates in these four ways.
These are accepted as [denials of] the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self.

Although in 144 the denials of the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self are called the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self, this may not represent what was said in the original Sanskrit text. The twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self are that (i) each of the five aggregates is a self, (ii) a self possesses each of the five aggregates, (iii) a self is present in each of the five aggregates, and (iv) each of the five aggregates is present in a self. To make clear what he meant to say, without changing what is literally said in the Tibetan translation, I have inserted "[denials of]" in 144d. Here twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self are enumerated, but there are in fact many more, since "the five aggregates" is a classification of the aggregates, and there are many aggregates included in the aggregate of bodily form and very many more in the aggregate of volitional forces.

The mistaken view of a self is the conception of a self. But in the commentary, Candrakīrti refers to the mistaken view of a self as the transient collection view. He can do this because the mistaken view of a self is the basis of the mistaken view of its possessions, and these two mistaken views together are the transient collection view. When in C144 Candrakīrti refers to the five selfless aggregates, he is referring to the five aggregates that do not exist by themselves.

In C144 Candrakīrti says that only twenty forms of the transient collection view are mentioned in the sūtras, since conceiving a self that is other than the aggregates is not a transient collection view. It is not a transient collection view because a self that is other than the aggregates is not conceived in dependence upon a transient collection of aggregates. Candrakīrti follows Nāgārjuna in adding a refutation of the existence of a self that is other than the aggregates to

the Buddha's refutation of the independent existence of a self so that the Tīrthikas' thesis that a self is other than the aggregates could be put aside.

Neither Nāgārjuna nor Candrakīrti thinks it necessary to refute the Tīrthikas' thesis of a separate self in order to eliminate the transient collection view. The proof that shows that a self does not exist by itself is that when we look for it in the causal basis of its conception, it is not any of the aggregates, not a self in which any of the aggregates is present, not a self present in any of the aggregates, and not a self that possesses any of the aggregates. It is also not necessary that a refutation of the transient collection view include a refutation that a collection of aggregates as a collection is a self, since the aggregates and a self are conceived in dependence upon one another, which implies that the refutation of the independent existence of a self implies the refutation of the independent existence of the aggregates. The refutation of the thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self is included in the Commentary so that we will not misidentify the self whose independent existence is to be refuted.

Candrakīrti supports his claim, that in the *Treatise* only five ways in which a self is related to each of the aggregates are presented, by quoting *Treatise* 22.1. His lengthy commentary in *Clear Words* on *Treatise* 22.1 is translated here. What is said about a Tathāgata in the verse applies equally to a self, and shows how, in *Clear Words*, Candrakīrti often quotes other verses in the *Treatise* and verses from the *Introduction* itself to support his claims.

Clear Words 22.1

To explain why a Tathāgata does not exist by its own nature,[49] he says that

He is neither the aggregates nor other than the aggregates;
the aggregates are not present in him, nor is he present in
them.
A Tathāgata is not a possessor of the aggregates.
So what is a Tathāgata?

If indeed a Tathāgata were an uncontaminated object, unaffiliated with word construction,[50] then (i) he would possess the svabhāva of the aggregates, [i.e. either] the svabhāva of the five aggregates called bodily form, feeling, discrimination, volitional forces and consciousness, or the svabhāva of the five aggregates called morality, concentration, wisdom, freedom, and the realization and knowledge of freedom, or (ii) he would be other than these. In this analysis the first-mentioned five aggregates are taken up because they are the causal basis of the conception of a sentient being; the latter [five aggregates] are not [taken up] because these are contained within the first-mentioned [five aggregates] and do not include all things.

But if he should be other than the five aggregates, the aggregates must be present in a Tathāgata, he must be present in the aggregates, or a Tathāgata must be a possessor of the aggregates in the way Devadatta is a possessor of wealth. And this is not possible even though considered from every angle. Why so? There [in the verse he first states that] a Tathāgata is not the aggregates. Why? It was said [in *Treatise* 10.1ab] that

> *If fire were its fuel*
> *agent and object of action would be one.*[51]

This is so. And in this case it is also true that if the Buddha were the acquisitions, agent, and object of action would be one. This is so. In addition [*Treatise* 18.1ab],

> *If a self were the aggregates,*
> *it would come to be and pass away [moment by moment].*[52]

So it was said. And in this case, it is also true that if a Buddha were the aggregates, he would come to be and pass away [moment by moment]. So a Tathāgata is not the aggregates. Nor is a Tathāgata other than the aggregates. Why? It was said [in *Treatise* 10.1cd] that

> *If fire were other than fuel,*
> *it would exist without fuel.*[53]

And [in *Treatise* 10.3] that

> *Because it does not exist in dependence upon something else,*
> *[its] burning is without a cause.*
> *Then effort is pointless;*
> *it is an unnecessary action.*[54]

In this case, it is also true that

> *If a Buddha were other than the acquisitions,*
> *he would be without acquisitions.*[55]

Also

> *Because he does not exist in dependence upon anything else,*
> *his acquiring [of the aggregates] is without a cause.*
> *Then effort is pointless;*
> *it is an unnecessary action.*

and

> *If he were other than the aggregates,*
> *he could not be characterized by [reference to] the*
> *aggregates.*

Since the aggregates and a Tathāgata are not other than one another, the aggregates cannot be present in a Tathāgata and a Tathāgata cannot be present in the aggregates. The discussion of these two theses was explained in the *Introduction to the Middle Way* [6.142].

> *A self is not present in the aggregates.*
> *Nor are the aggregates present in a self. For in this case,*
> *if they were other than one another, these ideas would be*
> *correct,*
> *but since they are not other than one another, these ideas are*
> *not correct.*

And since a Tathāgata is also not a possessor of the aggregates it was said [in 6.143] that

> *It is not said that a self possesses a bodily form,*
> *since a self that does not exist cannot possess anything.*
> *One who possesses a cow is other than it, but one who*
> *possesses a bodily form is not.*
> *But a self and a bodily form are neither other nor the same.*

In reality the five theses are contained within the two theses of sameness and otherness. The five theses are explained together by the teacher with reference to the transient collection view and other such things. This should be understood. The Tathāgata being analyzed is not present in the five aggregates. In what other self will he be present? The Tathāgata cannot exist in any case. Because he does not see the Tathāgata as possessing a svabhāva, the teacher asks [in *Treatise* 22.1d],

> *So what is a Tathāgata?*

There is nothing belonging to any of the three worlds that has been known to possess a svabhāva. This is the sense. And since a Tathāgata does not exist, there is no continuum of substances coming to be.[56] This has been established.

The unusual reference in this passage to the five aggregates as morality, concentration, wisdom, freedom, and the realization and knowledge of freedom seems

to be occasioned by a use of "five aggregates" to refer to these phenomena. The passages quoted from the *Treatise*, moreover, include all of the passages cited in the Commentary.

Verse 145

By the thunderbolt of the realization of selflessness, a mountain, the [transient collection] view, is destroyed. Destroyed together with a self are what rests on that bulky, massive mountain, these tall peaks of the transient collection view.

Candrakīrti refers to the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self as the tall peaks that rest on the mountain that is the innate transient collection view. The innate transient collection view is found in all ordinary beings, but the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self, the tall peaks, are said in the tradition to be its conceptual elaborations.

When emptiness is experienced on the path of insight, the twenty forms of the mistaken view of a self are abandoned. When this happens, it is said in a sūtra that we have entered the stream that flows into nirvāṇa. By repeatedly experiencing emptiness, the many layers of the inborn form of the transient collection view are gradually eliminated, and finally we are said to become Ārhats, who are beings who have cut off the mental afflictions at their root.

. . .

In 146 Candrakīrti introduces the theory of persons of the Pudgalavādins, whom he calls the Āryasāṃmitīyas. In 147 he argues if a self is substantially real, it is not inexplicable; in 148 he argues that since an inexplicable self is not substantially real, it is real by way of a conception; and in 149 he argues that if a self is inexplicable, it is not substantially real.

Verse 146

Some believe that a person is substantially real and inexplicable with respect to such things as sameness and otherness, permanence, and impermanence.[57]
They believe that it is known to exist by the six consciousnesses and that it is the support of the conception of a self.

Candrakīrti attributes to the Pudgalavādins the theses that (i) a person is substantially real, (ii) a person is inexplicable, (iii) a person is the object or support of the conception of a self, and (iv) a person is known to exist by the six consciousnesses.[58] *Pudgala* ("person") rather than *ātman* ("self") is used in Candrakīrti's account of the theses of the Pudgalavādins, since they use *pudgala* to refer to a self.

What it means for a person to be inexplicable is that it cannot be said to be either the same as or other than the aggregates and that it cannot be said to be permanent or impermanent. What it means for a person to be substantially real is that it exists as a thing, which means to exist by itself. When Candrakīrti says that "it is arguable that a person is substantially real since it is said to be a performer of actions, an enjoyer of objects, and to be in saṃsāra or nirvāṇa," he seems to be reporting why he thinks that the Pudgalavādins believe that a person exists by itself as an entity in the world. To my knowledge, the Pudgalavādins do not say that an inexplicable self is substantially real, but they do believe that an inexplicable self exists by itself.

Verse 147

Since it is not thought that mind is inexplicably related to bodily form,
a thing that exists is not thought to be inexplicable.
If it were proved that a self exists as a thing
in the way mind does, it would not be inexplicable.

The general argument is that an inexplicable self does not exist as a thing (i.e. is not substantially real) because what exists as a thing is not inexplicably related to another thing and an inexplicable self is inexplicably related to the aggregates. The Pudgalavādins, however, do not seem to have believed that what exists as a thing is not inexplicably related to another thing, since their inexplicable self exists as a thing and yet is inexplicably related to the aggregates.

Specifically, Candrakīrti argues that since mind exists as a thing and is not thought to be inexplicably related to bodily form, a self cannot be inexplicable if it exists as a thing. The implication is that an inexplicable self that exists by itself is an incoherent notion. The supposed incoherence is shown in the following reasoning: (i) a self exists as a thing; (ii) what exists as a thing is what is substantially real; (iii) what is substantially real is either other than or the same as the causal basis of its conception; (iv) a self is inexplicable; (v) what is inexplicable is what is neither other than nor the same as the causal basis of its conception; therefore, (vi) a self both is and is not other than or the same as the causal basis of its conception. Although the Pudgalavādins surely reject (iii), Candrakīrti ignores their rejection, I surmise, because he thinks that (iii) is true by convention.

But the Pudgalavādins can reply that a self does not exist as a thing in the same way mind exists as a thing, since unlike mind, which is an entity with a separate identity, a self is an entity without a separate identity. So the proof to which Candrakīrti refers in 147c does not seem to be *their* proof that something exists as a thing, but *his* proof that something exists as a thing, Candrakīrti's proof that something exists as a thing is that it is found in the causal basis of its conception. Although the Pudgalavādins surely believe that mind exists as a thing because it is found in the causal basis of its conception, they do not prove

the existence of a self as a thing in this way. They prove its existence by saying that it is perceived by the six consciousnesses when the aggregates are present.[59]

It is not surprising that Candrakīrti objects that the Pudgalavādins are committed to the view that a self exists as a thing in the way an aggregate like mind exists as a thing, since the same objection was made as early as the second century CE, in Muggaliputtatissa's *Kathāvatthu*, and it was repeated by later Buddhist critics.[60] However, Candrakīrti's argument is based on the premise that things inexplicably related cannot exist as things and Pudgalavādins, I believe, would deny the truth of this premise.

Verse 148

Because for you a pot does not exist as a thing,
and it is inexplicably related to its own elements,
a self inexplicably related to the aggregates
should not be thought to be established as existing by itself.

In his introduction to 148 Candrakīrti says that in this verse he proves that the self championed by the Pudgalavādins is real by way of a conception. So a full statement of the argument would be that just as the Pudgalavādins think that a pot does not exist as a thing and that it is inexplicably related to its own elements, so they should think that a self is not established as existing as a thing if it is inexplicably related to the aggregates, and since a self does not exist as a thing, it is real by way of a conception. In the verse itself, when Candrakīrti says that for the Pudgalavādins a pot does not exist as a thing, he means that for them it does not exist by itself. So the argument of the verse when formulated in terms of Candrakīrti's introductory comment is that (i) just as the Pudgalavādins believe that a pot does not exist by itself and is real by way of a conception because it is neither other than nor the same as its elements, (ii) so a self, which they believe is substantially real, must be real by way of a conception because it is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates.

But Pudgalavādins do not believe that something is real by way of a conception because it is neither other than nor the same as its elements. They believe that there are two kinds of things real by way of a conception, things like a pot, which is the same as the collection of elements in dependence upon which it is conceived, and things like a self, which is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates upon which it acts.[61] So they do not accept inexplicability as a test for conceptual reality. Candrakīrti's argument in 148 rests on a premise the Pudgalavādins do not accept. Since the Pudgalavādins do not identify being real by way of a conception with being inexplicable, it does not follow from the theses they themselves hold that a pot is real by way of a conception because it is neither other than nor the same as its elements.

Verse 149

You do not accept [the thesis] that consciousness is other than itself.
But you do accept [the thesis] that it is a thing other than bodily forms.
These two characters are seen in [all] things.
Therefore, since a self is not a thing, it does not exist.

In the introduction to 149 Candrakīrti says that in 147 he presented a refutation of their thesis that an inexplicable self exists as a thing, in 148 he presented a proof that an inexplicable self is real by way of a conception, and in 149 he will prove that an inexplicable self does not exist by itself because it does not possess the character of that which exists by itself. His argument against the separate existence of an inexplicable self is that since what is exists by itself is the same as itself and other than something else and a self is not other than the aggregates, it does not exist by itself. Specifically, as stated in the verse the argument is that since the Pudgalavādins believe that consciousness exists by itself and that it is not other than itself but other than other things, such as a bodily form, and they say that a self is not other than the aggregates, a self does not exist by itself. Candrakīrti's argument is based on the assumption that what exists by itself is not other than itself but other than other things. But the Pudgalavādins do not accept the idea that everything that exists by itself is not other than itself and is other than another, since a self is not other than the aggregates and yet exists by itself as the cause of their continuous functioning, just as fire is not other than fuel and yet exists by itself as the cause of its burning.

. . .

Verse 150abc

So the support of the conception of a self is not a thing,
a self is not other than the aggregates and does not possess their conventional nature.
It is without support-existence, and does not possess them.

Candrakīrti summarizes the argument of 121–43 for the conclusion that the object or support of the conception of a self does not exist independently. In 150b, where he says that a self does not possess the "conventional nature" of the aggregates, he means that it does not possess their defining properties. In 150c he uses the Sanskrit compound I translate as "support-existence" to refer to a self being present in the aggregates as its support and the aggregates being present in a self as their support. In 150abc, only five of the conclusions he has previously drawn are mentioned. Omitted are the conclusions that a collection of aggregates is not a self and that a configuration of the aggregates is not a self.

These conclusions are omitted, presumably, since the theses they are used to refute are not forms of the transient collection view.

Verse 150d

It exists in dependence upon the aggregates.

Candrakīrti says that this line of the verse shows that discourse and thought about a self are appropriate even though it does not exist by itself. The reason that discourse and thought about it are appropriate is that the existence of a self has not been unqualifiedly denied: a self still exists in dependence upon the aggregates as what acquires them as parts.

In C150d Candrakīrti says that he earlier explained the expression, "This comes to be in dependence upon that," in order to show that conventional realities are not to be rejected. He gave his account of why conventional realities are not to be rejected when he replied in 6.23–37 to an objection raised in 6.22. The objection is that since the world recognizes that one object is produced from another, one should not argue, as Nāgārjuna does, that one object is not produced from another. Candrakīrti answers the objection by employing the distinction between the ultimate reality and conventional reality of an object of conception.

The ultimate reality of an object of conception is the way in which it actually exists, and its conventional reality is what conceals its ultimate reality. The ultimate reality of an object is its intrinsic nature of not existing by its own nature. Its conventional reality conceals its ultimate reality because its conception makes it falsely to appear to exist by its own nature. The reply to the objection in 6.22 is that there is no conflict between an analysis that shows that an object is not produced from another and the conventional belief that it is produced from another, since the conventional belief is not held on the basis of the analysis that reveals its ultimate reality.

The implication of this earlier account of what is produced from something else for understanding 150d is that Candrakīrti is not completely denying the existence of a self, in spite of rejecting its independent existence on the basis of analysis, since by convention a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates. This two-realities account of the existence of a self is accepted, he says, so that the use of conventional discourse and thought about a self may be retained. The existence of a self in dependence upon the aggregates is its existence as something dependently conceived. Candrakīrti is once again closely following the lead of Nāgārjuna.[62]

. . .

Verse 151

It is not accepted that a chariot is other than its parts
or that it is not other than them. It does not possess parts.
Its parts are not that in which it is present; nor is it present in its parts.
***It is not a mere collection* [*of its parts*]*, and it is not a configuration* [*of its parts*].**

In 150 Candrakīrti said that a self exists as dependently conceived, and here in 151 he provides us with an easily understood example of something that exists as dependently conceived. His discussion of the chariot analogy begins in 151 with the simple assertion a chariot does not exist in any of the seven ways.

Candrakīrti himself does not believe that the only form of dependent conception (*upādāyaprajñapti*, *brten nas gdags pa*) is a conception in dependence upon parts acquired, since he thinks, for instance, that cause and effect are conceived in dependence upon one another, neither of which is acquired by the other. He uses the analogy of a chariot, which is like a self conceived in dependence upon parts acquired. The example of a chariot is chosen because it was used in scripture to explain how a self is conceived.

…

Candrakīrti says that he still needs to establish the thesis that a collection of the parts of a chariot is not a chariot and the thesis that a special configuration of its parts is not a chariot. He briefly discussed these theses in 135 and 136. In 135ab Candrakīrti denied that a collection of aggregates is a self because its consequence is that the collection of the parts of a chariot is a chariot. But he did not state there why he thinks that a collection of chariot-parts is not a chariot. In 136 he rejected the fallback thesis, that a special configuration of the aggregates is a self in the way that a special configuration of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, since it implies that a self does not possess mental aggregates. The first thesis is the sameness thesis in its application to a chariot. We may call the first thesis in its application to a chariot *the collection thesis*, and the second in its application to a chariot we may call *the configuration thesis*. Since Candrakīrti did not raise and answer the question of whether or not a configuration of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, and if it is not, why not, he returns to the collection thesis so that he may discuss these questions about the configuration theses.

Verse 152

If a mere collection [of its parts] were a chariot,
a chariot would exist even when it is divided into small pieces.
Since a possessor of parts does not exist, parts do not exist,
and [so] it cannot be said that their configuration is a chariot.

In 152ab Candrakīrti presents an objection to the collection thesis. The objection is that if the collection of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, the chariot would exist even when its parts are not assembled. A comparable objection cannot be brought against the collection thesis in its application to a self, since the aggregates, as things acquired, do not exist in an unassembled state.

In 152cd Candrakīrti presents an objection to the configuration thesis. This thesis was put forward in his introduction to 136 as a possible explanation of why a chariot ceases to be a chariot when it is broken into its parts. According to the configuration thesis, the configuration of the parts of a chariot when the parts are assembled is a chariot. Candrakīrti argues that if a chariot does not exist by itself, the parts of a chariot do not exist by themselves, and if the parts of a chariot do not exist by themselves, the parts cannot possess a configuration that is a chariot.

Candrakīrti's opponents might have replied that his objection to the configuration thesis does not apply if the elements from which a chariot arises are not chariot-parts, but simply elements of reality. Their thesis, they might have said, is that a special configuration of elements is a chariot, not that a special configuration of chariot-parts is a chariot.

Candrakīrti would object to the reply that if these elements are not chariot-parts, there is no explanation of why any configuration of them would be a chariot, as opposed to something else, since there is nothing about a configuration of elements unrelated to one another that would cause the mind to conceive the configuration as a chariot, as opposed to conceiving it as something else.[63]

. . .

In the introduction to 153 another objection to the configuration thesis is set up. Candrakīrti distinguishes two possible interpretations of the configuration thesis and argues that in neither interpretation is a configuration of the chariot-parts possible. He says that if it is said that a configuration of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, it must be said whether (i) the configuration of its parts is a chariot, or (ii) the configuration of the collection of the parts is a chariot. Examples of the configuration of the parts of a chariot are the configuration of its wheels and the configuration of the axle that is attached to the wheels. The configuration of the collection of its parts is the configuration of all of its parts in relation to one another when its parts are assembled. The argument against (i) is presented in 153–4. The argument against (ii) is presented in 155.

The objection to (i) has the form of a dilemma: if a special configuration of each of its parts is a chariot, the configuration of each before the parts are assembled is not the same or not other after the parts are assembled; but it is not the same, since the unassembled parts are not a chariot, and it is not other, since they are not perceived to be other. Therefore the configuration of each of the parts of a chariot is not a chariot. In 153 he argues that it is not the same, and in 154abc he argues that it is not other.

Verse 153

Since the configuration of each of the parts would have existed before,
in the same manner as it does now, as belonging to the chariot,
why did the chariot not exist when the parts were separated,
as it does now [when the parts are assembled]?

Verse 154

If, when a chariot exists now, the configuration of its parts
is different [from what it was before it was assembled,]
this should be perceived. But it is not.
So the mere configuration [of each of its parts] is not the chariot.

In 155 Candrakīrti turns to the thesis that a configuration of the collection of all of its parts is a chariot.

Verse 155

Because for you this collection does not exist at all,
[you must admit that] the configuration is not of a collection of parts.
How, in dependence upon what does not exist at all,
could a configuration exist in this case?

Candrakīrti argues that his opponents cannot say that a configuration of the collection of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, since they themselves believe that a collection of the parts of a chariot does not exist at all as a collection by reason of not existing by itself and a configuration of the collection of the parts of a chariot does not exist if the collection of the parts does not exist. Since the opponents think that what does not exist by itself is what does not exist at all, Candrakīrti argues, they cannot say that a configuration of the collection of the parts of a chariot is a chariot, since there is nothing that possesses a configuration. In 134 Candrakīrti argued that if his opponents say that a person-property self is a collection of aggregates as a collection, they cannot say that a self possesses person-properties, since they deny that a collection of aggregates exists by itself. Here he argues that they cannot say that a chariot is a configuration of the collection of its parts, since they deny that a collection of things as a collection exists by itself.

...

In the introduction to 156 Candrakīrti considers a reply to his objection to the configuration thesis. His objection was that his opponents cannot say that a configuration of the collection of chariot-parts is a chariot, since a collection of

chariot-parts does not exist by itself. The reply is that a configuration of the collection of chariot-parts can be a chariot, even though (i) a chariot does not exist by itself, (ii) the collection of its parts does not exist by itself, and (iii) the configuration of the collection of its parts does not exist by itself, since all that is required to make the configuration a chariot is that a configuration that does not exist by itself arises in dependence upon a collection of chariot parts that does not exist by itself. So the chariot can be a configuration of the collection of its parts.

Candrakīrti rejects this reply because he does not think that chariot-parts exist by themselves or that that to which we refer when we refer to a chariot is a mentally constructed configuration of the collection of chariot-parts. He believes that the only thing to which we refer when by convention we refer to a chariot is a mentally constructed chariot.

Verse 156

Just as you accept this, [so you should accept that]
in dependence upon unreal causes,
effects that possess a false svabhāva,
all kinds of them, are known to arise.

Instead of rejecting their reply to his objection to the configuration thesis by denying the independent existence of chariot-parts Candrakīrti says that their reply implies the acceptance of his own thesis that effects that do not exist by themselves arise from causes that do not exist by themselves. He thinks that it has this implication because he assumes that a dependently existing configuration of the collection of chariot-parts arising from a dependently existing collection of chariot-parts is a dependently existing effect arising from a dependently existing cause. When in the verse he refers to causes and effects that possess false intrinsic natures, he is referring to causes and effects that falsely appear to exist independently when they in fact exist dependently.

In C156 Candrakīrti generalizes the point made in 156. He says (i) motivating dispositions, which possess false intrinsic natures, arise in dependence upon ignorance, which possesses a false intrinsic nature, (ii) sprouts, which possess a false intrinsic nature, arise in dependence upon seeds that possess a false intrinsic nature, and, in general, (iii) effects that possess false intrinsic natures arise in dependence upon causes that possess false intrinsic natures. Candrakīrti likens clinging to effects and causes that exist by themselves to a hunter incessantly hunting the shadows of animals rather than the animals because he mistakenly assumes that the shadows possess edible flesh. The meaning of the comparison is that our attachment to the independent existence of objects that do not independently exist is like an attachment to eating what cannot be eaten.

Verse 157

> ***So it also cannot be argued that a thought of a pot***
> ***arises on the basis of its elemental parts being related in some way.***
> ***Elemental parts do not exist because they do not come to be.***
> ***For this reason, it cannot be argued that they have a configuration.***

Candrakīrti has already argued that his opponents cannot say that a collection of chariot-parts or a configuration of chariot-parts is a chariot, since they deny that a chariot exists by itself, and if a chariot does not exist by itself, chariot-parts do not exist by themselves. He argues that it is not even true that a configuration of independently existing parts that are elements of reality is the causal basis of the conception of a conventionally real object, since independently existing parts that are elements of reality do not come to be and the parts of conventionally real objects that do not come to be do not exist at all. He believes that independently existing parts of conventionally real objects do not come to be because (i) what independently exists is not produced from causes and conditions and (ii) what is not produced from causes and conditions does not come to be. In 157d Candrakīrti points out that since his opponents are committed to the view that elements of reality that are parts of conventionally real objects do not exist at all, they cannot argue that they possesses a configuration.

The argument Candrakīrti uses to support his claim about causality was first presented by Nāgārjuna in *Treatise* 1.1, which is the verse explained by Candrakīrti in 6.8–44 and 98–119 of the *Introduction* to support the doctrine of the selflessness of phenomena. Nāgārjuna's argument in this verse is based on the assumption that what comes to be is an effect produced by a cause, and since what exists by itself is not produced by a cause, what exists by itself does not come to be.

...

The remainder of Candrakīrti's discussion of the selflessness of persons falls into two parts. In the first, at 158–61, he argues with the help of the example of a chariot that even though a self does not exist by itself, the convention that it exists is not undermined, and in the second, at 162–5, he draws his final conclusions.

Candrakīrti introduces 158 as the opponents posing an objection to his thesis that the seven-part analysis shows that a chariot does not exist by itself. The opponents' objection is that the thesis undermines the use of the word "chariot" in the world because it refutes the independent existence of a chariot.

Candrakīrti replies that since the opponents have presented no other analysis for determining the independent existence of a chariot than the analysis that shows that a chariot does not exist by itself, they are committed to the conclusion that a chariot does not exist at all, since they identify existence with independent existence. If the refutation of the independent existence of a chariot also

refutes the conventional existence of a chariot, as the opponents' objection implies that it does, and the opponents identify existence with independent existence, they have no way in which to allow for the conventional existence of a chariot, since they have no way to establish its conventional existence other than by the analysis that will show that it does not unqualifiedly not exist. So the objection applies to them: they are committed to the total non-existence of a chariot. Candrakīrti explains in 158 why the conventional existence of a chariot is not contradicted by the fact that it does not exist by itself.

Verse 158

It does not exist in any of the seven ways
either in reality or in the world.
But from the perspective of the world that does not analyze [phenomena]
it is conceived in dependence upon its parts.

Apart from analysis, a chariot exists in dependence upon the collection of its parts, just as a self exists apart from analysis in dependence upon a collection of aggregates. The proof, that a chariot does not exist by itself, does not contradict the convention that it exists because the analysis that shows that a chariot does not exist by itself does not contradict the convention that it exists in dependence upon the collection of its parts. In other words, the practice of dependently conceiving phenomena is not undermined by the fact that they do not exist independently, since dependently conceived things do not exist independently. Candrakīrti says that the sevenfold analysis of a chariot need not establish either the independent existence or the conventional existence of a chariot in order that the practice of dependently conceiving a chariot be accepted. Though we dependently conceive the things we conceive, we do not notice that we do so, since we do not analyze the objects we conceive to determine whether or not they exist independently.

Candrakīrti believes that the Abhidharmikas cannot claim as he does that the convention that a chariot exists is true in the only way in which it could be true, which is by convention. His analysis of a chariot does not, as their analysis does, yield the result that the convention that a chariot exists is false. Candrakīrti's analysis does not yield this result because it does not, as their analysis does, show that a chariot is not a chariot. The result of Candrakīrti's analysis of a chariot is that a chariot does not exist independently, not that it does not exist at all.

Verse 159abc

The chariot itself has parts. It has components
and is said to be an agent by those wanderers [in saṃsāra],
for whom it also exists as that which acquires [parts].

Candrakīrti says that a chariot is conceived in dependence upon its parts or components by those who wander in saṃsāra, since they conceive it as an agent that acquires chariot-parts. An agent that acquires something is what is represented by the subject of an active transitive verb whose direct object represents an object upon which this agent acts. (See C137cd.) In his introduction to 159abc Candrakīrti says that different names and conceptions are applied to a chariot according to a well-known agreement within the world. The agreement to which he refers is that a chariot is conceived in dependence upon things it acquires as parts or components. He says that this agreement is made apart from a chariot being analyzed to determine whether or not it exists independently. The parts or components of a whole to which Candrakīrti refers are its proper parts, which are parts defined by reference to the whole of which they are the parts. So the wheel of a chariot, for instance, is a chariot-wheel, not a wheel of some other vehicle.

Verse 159d

Do not destroy the conventions generally agreed upon in the world.

The conventions of the world the Abhidharmikas destroy in this case are that a part exists in dependence upon a whole and that an acquirer is not the acquired. When they assert a thesis that destroys a convention of the world, they are violating the Buddha's injunction not to destroy the conventions of the world. The Buddha said not to destroy these conventions, since they are the basis of his claims that we suffer in saṃsāra and that we can free ourselves from this suffering by following the eight-fold path to nirvāṇa.

In C159d Candrakīrti chides the Abhidharmikas (i) for misunderstanding the sacred texts and (ii) for misunderstanding the conventions generally agreed upon in the world. He says that their misunderstanding of the sacred texts has led to their failure to accept the convention that part and whole exist in dependence upon one another. Since a chariot, by convention, is not other than its parts, they think that the collection of its parts is a chariot. The misunderstanding of the sacred scriptures that has led them to think that the collection of its parts is a chariot is a misunderstanding concerning the Buddha's teaching that a self is conceived in dependence upon the collection of its parts. The Abhidharmikas mistakenly interpret this as the teaching that a self is nothing but the collection of its parts. The misinterpretation arises because they forgot that the elements into which they analyzed a self are self-parts, not elements unrelated to one another or to a self.

Their misunderstanding of the conventions generally agreed upon in the world is their belief that things acquired can exist without acquirers. What they misunderstand is the convention that acquired things and their acquirers are distinct. The Abhidharmikas think that the convention implies that even though acquirers exist in dependence upon things acquired, things acquired do not exist in dependence upon acquirers.

The Abhidharmikas might object, of course, that the sameness thesis does not destroy the conventions of the world, but in fact explains why the conventions are successful. They think that the thesis, that a conventionally real object is actually a collection of substantially real elements of reality in a causal continuum, explains the efficacy of the convention that the object exists as what it is conceived to be. They might also object that they do not destroy the convention that an acquirer and what it acquires are distinct. They might say, for instance, that when the mind superimposes upon a collection of the elements of reality the conception of an agent that acquires the elements in the collection as parts, it also superimposes upon the elements in the collection the conception of being the acquired proper parts of this whole. In this way they may deny that the elements of which conventional objects are composed are the proper parts of the wholes of which they are the elements.

Candrakīrti's reply to the objection would surely be that (i) since a chariot being its parts contradicts the convention that a chariot acquires its parts, the convention that a chariot is an acquirer of parts is not explained, and (ii) the causal basis of the conception of a chariot cannot be a collection of elements that are not conceived as its proper parts, since the whole of parts being conceived as a chariot in dependence upon its parts is not then explained. In any case, such elements of reality, which are said to be substantially real, do not exist, since they do not come to be (see 157) and agent and object of action are not the same (see 137).

Verse 160

How can what does not exist in [any of] these seven ways exist
if its existence is not found by a meditator?
Since as well [as not violating convention] he easily enters into the way things are,
here it should be accepted that it is established [not to exist].

In C160 Candrakīrti reintroduces the meditator who was invited in 120 to refute the independent existence of a self so that he might become free from the sufferings of saṃsāra. Candrakīrti says that if this meditator analyzes a conventionally real object in the way that the conventionally real self is analyzed, he will very quickly reach the depths of the way things are, which has just been shown not to contradict their conventional reality. The depths of the way things are is a direct experience of emptiness.

Candrakīrti says in 160c that by using this analysis a meditator easily sees emptiness without having to deny the existence of conventional realities. When in the commentary he says that a conventionally real chariot is an erroneous idea of those whose wisdom eye is covered by the glaze of ignorance he means that the conceptual mind covers the mentally constructed chariot with the false appearance of independent existence. A meditator easily enters into the way

things are because he is unimpeded by the mistaken view that a chariot either exists by itself or does not exist at all.

In his comment before 161 Candrakīrti mentions a reply his opponents might make to his objection that chariot-parts do not exist unless a chariot does. The reply is that even though a chariot is not perceived in the causal basis of its conception, its chariot-parts are perceived there. Candrakīrti's objection to this reply is that

Verse 161

If a chariot does not exist, then since
what possesses its parts does not exist, its parts do not exist.
When, for instance, a chariot is burned, the [chariot-]parts no longer exist.
The flames of the mind consume both a thing [whole] and its parts.

Chariot-parts do not exist by themselves if a chariot does not, since the mind's analysis of a chariot consumes both part and whole. So his opponents' reply is wrong that chariot-parts are found in the causal basis of the conception of a chariot. Not finding chariot-parts in the causal basis of the conception of a chariot is like not finding the threads of a cloth that has been burnt to a crisp. The analysis of a chariot is like the flames of the mind burning away the chariot and its parts. Candrakīrti adds that because his opponents have forgotten that things such as chariot-wheels are conceived as parts of the chariot, they do not realize that they do not find the parts of a chariot when they look for a chariot in the causal basis of its conception.

. . .

In 162–5 Candrakīrti draws four conclusions from his discussion of the selflessness of persons. In 162 he concludes that a self that does not exist by itself is an acquirer of the aggregates. Here he side-steps his opponents' assumption that a self that does not exist by itself is a person-property self. In 163 he says that since a self does not exist by itself, the properties attributed to a self that exists by itself do not exist. In 164 he concludes that the object of the transient collection view is an unanalyzed convention, and in 165 he concludes that a meditator becomes free from suffering in saṃsāra by means of refuting the independent existence of the object of the transient collection view.

In the introduction to 162 Candrakīrti says that it is necessary for a meditator to rely on the conventionally real self in order to be able to realize its ultimate reality, and then in 162 he says that the conventionally real self is the self that acquires the aggregates, elements, and the bases of perception.

Verse 162

In the same way, by a well-known convention of the world,
in dependence upon aggregates, elements, and the six bases of perception
it is accepted that a self is also what acquires [these things].
The things acquired are the object and it is the agent.

Candrakīrti now applies to a self that acquires parts what he has said about a chariot in 159, except that now he reveals in C162 that he thinks that a chariot is conceived in dependence upon acquiring its parts. He is saying that just as a chariot is by convention conceived in dependence upon the things it acquires such as wheels, so a self is by convention conceived in dependence upon the things it acquires such as the aggregates, elements, and six bases of perception. When examining his opponents' thesis that a collection of aggregates is a self Candrakīrti treated the aggregates as they did as the parts of a self. But here in 162 he no longer refers to the aggregates as the parts of a self. According to his own analysis, a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates it acquires, not the aggregates as its parts, since the aggregates are not parts of a self until they are acquired. Consequently, Candrakīrti does not think that a self is conceived in dependence upon its parts, but in dependence upon acquiring parts. This is why in 162b he includes among the things in dependence upon a self is conceived the aggregates, elements, and bases of perception. Candrakīrti is not referring to the aggregates, elements, and bases of perception acquired by a self as parts of a self, but to aggregates, elements, and bases of perception that a self makes into parts by acquiring them. They are not the proper parts of a self until they are acquired. When they are acquired they become proper parts of a self in the way that things like wheels and so on become the proper parts of a chariot. When Candrakīrti says in 162d that the things acquired are the object he means that the aggregates and the others are the object upon which a self, as an agent, acts when it performs the action of acquiring them as parts.

Candrakīrti says in C162 that in the discourse of the world both a chariot and a self are agents that acquire and possess parts and their parts are the things acquired. So even though neither a chariot nor a self can be found in the causal basis of its conception, the parts it acquires, each exists by convention as what acquires certain things as parts. In the commentary Candrakīrti repeats for emphasis the point that it is accepted that a self is an acquirer of the aggregates so that what is "said in the world" will not be contradicted.[64]

This concludes Candrakīrti's use of the example of a chariot to show that the existence of a self is not unqualifiedly denied when it is shown by means of the sevenfold analysis that a self does not exist by itself.

Verse 163

Because it is not a thing that exists,
it neither is nor is not the same entity [at different times],
it neither comes to be nor passes away, it is neither permanent, and so forth,
and it is without sameness or otherness.

Since it has been shown that an independently existing self does not exist, it cannot be said of an independently existing self that it is or is not the same entity at different times, comes to be or passes away, is permanent, impermanent, both or neither, or is the same as nor other than the aggregates it acquires.

Candrakīrti is well aware that the statements, that a self is the same entity at different times and that a self is not the same entity at different times, are contradictory. If we define contradictory statements as statements that cannot both be true or both be false, it is clear that Candrakīrti cannot assert that one is false without implying that the other is true. So what exactly does he think he is saying when he says that a self is neither the same entity at different times nor not the same entity at different times?

Candrakīrti is not saying that both of these statements are false. He does not wish to violate the law of non-contradiction. He is saying that an independently existing self about which the statements are purportedly made does not exist. He is saying that these statements, whose use presupposes that a self exists by itself, suffer from reference failure. However, this does not mean that Candrakīrti denies that these statements are true or false from a conventional point of view or that he denies that from a conventional point of view the law of non-contradiction is a necessary truth. The law of contradiction is necessarily true in the only way in which any statement or thought can be necessarily true, which is by convention.

Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.6 and *Treatise* 27.12 to support his denial that an independently existing self is not the same entity at different times, *Treatise* 27.3–4 to support his denial that an independently existing self is the same entity at different times, *Treatise* 22.12–14 to support his denial that an independently existing self is either permanent, impermanent, both or neither, and *Treatise* 18.1 to support his denial that an independently existing self is either the same as or other than the aggregates. He also quotes a few words from *Treatise* 10.1 to support his denial that an independently existing self comes to be or passes away. Finally, he quotes two verses from a sūtra to support his denial that a self independently exists.

The parts of the *Treatise* upon which Candrakīrti most often relies in composing his account of Nāgārjuna's theory of persons are *Treatise* 27, 18, 22, and 10. Although in *Treatise* 10 Candrakīrti discusses fire and fuel, he includes quotes from *Treatise* 10 because the pattern of argument used there to show that an independently existing fire does not exist is the same as that used to show that an

independently existing self does not exist. For this reason, verses from *Treatise* 10 are also quoted in the Commentary.

Since in C163 Candrakīrti quotes verses from these different chapters of the *Treatise*, here I will summarize the arguments of *Treatise* 27.1–16, 22.1–16, and 18.1–12, and translate Candrakīrti's commentaries on the specific verses he quotes in the Commentary. This will enable readers to see how the verses Candrakīrti quotes fit into the arguments of the relevant chapters. I will also summarize *Treatise* 10.1–16, which supplies the format of Nāgārjuna's refutation of the independent existence of a self and then quote and explain Candrakīrti's commentaries on the verses quoted.

Treatise 27

In support of the 163b claim that a self neither is nor is not the same entity at different times, Candrakīrti cites *Treatise* 27.6, 27.12, and 27.3–4. Since eight verses from *Treatise* 27 are quoted in the Commentary, and these verses are used by Candrakīrti in his interpretations of Nāgārjuna's account of the selflessness of persons, the context in which these verses occur will be explained by putting them within their place in Nāgārjuna's argument in *Treatise* 27. Also included, where needed, are Candrakīrti's interpretations of these verses, especially his interpretations of the verses in the first half of *Treatise* 27, which contains the eight verses he quotes in the Commentary.

In *Treatise* 27 Nāgārjuna presents refutations of sixteen mistakes made concerning the beginning and end of the present existence of something. The mistake is to assume that a present thing, a past thing, and a future thing each independently exists. Nāgārjuna refers to a past thing as the prior limit of a present thing and to a future thing as the posterior limit of a present thing. Unacceptable consequences follow from these assumptions because the present, past, and future selves are neither the same as nor other than one another.

The first four mistakes Nāgārjuna discusses concern the past and present self. The first four mistakes are that (i) a present self existed by itself in the past, (ii) a present self did not exist by itself in the past, (iii) a present self both did and did not exist by itself in the past, and (iv) a present self neither did nor did not exist by itself in the past. Nāgārjuna argues that it is false that a present self exists by itself, since it cannot be either the same as or other than a past self.

The second four mistakes he discusses concern an independently existing future and present self. They are that (v) a present independently existing self will exist in the future, (vi) a present independently existing self will not exist by itself in the future, (vii) a present independently existing self both will and will not exist in the future, and (viii) a present independently existing self neither will nor will not exist in the future. He argues that none of these four views is true, since a present independently existing self is neither the same as a future self nor other than a future self, which implies that it does not exist independently.

The third four mistakes he discusses concern the past and present self, but in this case the mistakes are that a self is by its own nature permanent, impermanent, both, or neither. Nāgārjuna's objections to these mistaken views are based on the assumption that a present self that exists by itself must be either the same as a past self or other than a past self.

The final four mistakes he discusses concern the future and present world of sentient beings, regardless of whether the world of sentient beings is or is not the same as their aggregates. These are the mistaken views that a world that exists by itself has an end, does not have an end, both, or neither. Nāgārjuna rejects all of these views because of their unacceptable consequences.

After summarizing in *Treatise* 27.1–2 the sixteen mistakes to which he will object, in *Treatise* 27.3–8 Nāgārjuna argues that the first four are mistakes because they are based on a mistake about a past self and a present self. In *Treatise* 27.9–12 he argues that the second four are mistakes because they are based on a mistake about a future self and a present self. Then, after summarizing in *Treatise* 27.13 the result of the argument he indicates in *Treatise* 27.14 how the third four mistakes are mistakes. In *Treatise* 27.15–6 he argues that the final four mistakes are indeed mistakes.

In *Treatise* 27.1–2 Nāgārjuna summarizes the sixteen mistakes. He begins an argument for the thesis that "I existed" is not true if the past and present self each exists by itself. He asserts in 27.3 that "I existed" is not true, since a present self that exists by itself cannot be the same entity as a past self:

> *The statement, "I existed in the past."*
> *cannot be supported by argument.*
> *That same person who existed in the past*
> *certainly is not the same [entity] as this one.*

In *Treatise* 27.4 Nāgārjuna says that it cannot be replied that a past self is certainly not the same (entity) as a present self, since if they are the same entity, the self is other than the aggregates it acquires and there is no self that is other than the aggregates it acquires. It would be other than the aggregates because it has not changed and the aggregates have changed:

> *"This is the same self." If this is so,*
> *the things it has acquired are different [from it].*
> *What sort of thing is your self,*
> *since it is totally separate from what is acquired?*

Should it be replied that since a self cannot be other than the aggregates, it is the aggregates, Nāgārjuna argues in *Treatise* 27.5 that a self is not the aggregates, since by convention a self that is the aggregates does not exist. In *Treatise* 27.6 Nāgārjuna continues his argument against the sameness thesis. He argues that his opponents cannot say that the aggregates are a self, (i) since for them the

aggregates constantly come to be and pass away as different aggregates, and a self by convention does not come to be and pass away as different selves, and (ii) since by convention they are what is acquired by a self and what is acquired cannot be what acquires it.

> *What is acquired is certainly not a self;*
> *for that comes to be and passes away.*
> *How indeed will what is acquired*
> *become what acquires it?*

Nāgārjuna then returns to the otherness thesis. He argues in *Treatise* 27.7 that a self other than the aggregates does not exist because a self that is other than the aggregates is not conceived in dependence upon the aggregates it acquires.

> *Certainly, no self is found that is other than what it acquires.*
> *If it were other, it would be conceived*
> *without reference to what is acquired,*
> *but it is not [so] conceived.*

Nāgārjuna concludes in *Treatise* 27.8 that (i) a self is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates it acquires, (ii) a self does not exist without what it acquires, and (iii) these conclusions do not imply that a self does not exist at all.

> *So a self is not other than what it acquires*
> *and yet is not what is acquired;*
> *nor does it exist without what is acquired.*
> *It is certainly not without existence.*

When in 27.8d Nāgārjuna says that a self is not without existence, he means that a self exists in dependence upon being conceived in dependence upon the aggregates.

In *Treatise* 27.9 Nāgārjuna begins to argue that past-tense denials of the existence of a self, such as "I did not exist," are not true if based on the mistaken view that the present and past self exist by themselves. He says in this verse that "I did not exist" is not true, since a past self, by convention, is not other than a present self.

If a past self were other than a present self, then since a self is necessarily born, a present self would be born without having died. (It is assumed, of course, that every birth of a self is preceded by its death in another rebirth.) So in *Treatise* 27.10 Nāgārjuna says that

> *If this [present self] were other [than a past self],*
> *even though [the existence of] that [past self] is denied,*
> *it [the present self] would exist. If this were so,*
> *It would be born without having died.*

It would also follow, he says in *Treatise* 27.11, that a self could not collect the karmic result of an action performed in a prior life and a different self would collect that result.

> *[The karmic results of] actions would be totally destroyed or*
> *annihilated.*
> *[The karmic results of] actions performed by one [self]*
> *would be enjoyed by another.*
> *There would be such consequences and more.*

In *Treatise* 27.12 Nāgārjuna adds, in reply to the objection that if a present self did not exist in the past, it could not be born, that since a past self would have died before a present self is born, the present self would be produced by a cause or it would be born without a cause. If produced by a cause, the present self is not the same as the past self, and it could not be born without a cause.

> *"If it did not exist [in the past], it could not be born."*
> *Here an error occurs.*
> *A self would then be an effect [produced by a cause]*
> *or it would be born without a cause.*

In *Treatise* 27.13 Nāgārjuna draws his conclusion from the arguments of *Treatise* 27.3–12 and he says that the arguments also show that "I both did and did not exist" and "I neither did nor did not exist" are not true. In *Treatise* 27.14 he summarizes a refutation of the truth of future-tense statements about an independently existing a self, such as "I will exist," "I will not exist," "I will both exist and not exist," and "I will neither exist nor not exist." He argues that these statements are not true because the arguments already used to show that the previous statements are not true also apply to these statements.

In *Treatise* 27.15 Nāgārjuna argues that an independently existing self cannot be permanent, since if a self that exists independently as a god is permanent, it would then be a self that exists both as a god and as a human when it is born as a human, and a permanent self could not, in any case, have been born, since what is permanent cannot be born. Both of these consequences contradict the conventional beliefs held in India about a self.

Finally, in *Treatise* 27.16 Nāgārjuna argues that

> *If a human being were other than a god,*
> *it would be impermanent.*
> *If a human being were other than a god,*
> *a continuum would not arise.*

Here Nāgārjuna is arguing that if a self exists by itself and a self born as a human being is other than a self born as a god, this self would be impermanent, since it

is not the same entity at different times, and there would be no continuum to which the human being and god both belong, since a causal continuum of independently existing things is impossible.

This concludes Nāgārjuna's examination of the first sixteen mistaken views in *Treatise* 27.

. . .

In C163 Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.3–4 to show that Nāgārjuna believes that a self that exists by itself is not the same entity at different times. Here I translate Candrakīrti's commentary on these verses in *Clear Words*. First, his commentary on *Treatise* 27.3:

Clear Words *27.3*

> There [in *Treatise* 27.2] the four mistaken views that pertain to the prior limit [of the present existence of something] were not explained.[65] In order to provide an explanation [of these mistaken views] he says that
>
> *The statement "I existed in the past"*
> *cannot be supported by argument.*
> *That same person who existed in the past*
> *certainly is not the same [entity] as this one.*
>
> "That very person existed in the past." If he were the same person who exists right now, then it would be correct for him to claim, "I existed." But surely this is not possible, since permanence is its consequence and because it is not true that permanent things are present in saṃsāra. And for one who exists in one birth there is the consequence that there will be grasping at many births.
>
> Here, as before, if a person who had been reborn into places such as the hells now appears among humans due to the complex workings of [the law of] actions [and their results], he thinks [to himself]: "I existed as an inhabitant of hell," this cannot be right. How, indeed, could it be that someone who exists as a human being would [in the past] be an inhabitant of hell or of other realms?
>
> But then this is written in a sūtra: "I myself, Cakravartī, was for a while at that time the king called Māndhāta." How is that to be understood? It should be known that this quotation is used as a refutation of [a self] being many [different selves], not as a justification of [a self] being the same [entity at different times in the way a permanent thing is]. For it is [also] written that he was not [the same as] someone else for a while at that time. If again [we say,] "He is that one," then the past and present [self] are the same. What is the error? As far as what has been said here, the error is that a self would be permanent

According to Candrakīrti, in *Treatise* 27.3 Nāgārjuna denies that it can be proved that "I existed" is true if a self independently exists, since "I existed" implies that a present self is the same entity as a past self. If a present self is the same entity as a past self, it is permanent, which is not true, since a self is in saṃsāra and there is nothing permanent in saṃsāra. So Nāgārjuna says in 27.3ab that it cannot be argued that an independently existing self is permanent.

If an independently existing self is not permanent, it is not the same entity at different times. For this reason, Candrakīrti cites *Treatise* 27.3 in support of the thesis that an independently existing self is not the same entity at different times. Candrakīrti adds two further unacceptable consequences of an independently existing self being permanent and then poses and answers a pair of objections.

The first unacceptable consequence he mentions of an independently existing self being permanent is that this self would grasp at having many births. What this means is not clear. Why would a self that exists by itself and is permanent grasp at having many births? Perhaps Candrakīrti is saying that this self would not seek to escape rebirth in saṃsāra. If so, he is assuming that this consequence is unacceptable because it is contrary to the practice of Buddhism. The second unacceptable consequence he mentions is that a human being could not say that he was once an inhabitant of a hell realm. This means that if an independently existing self is permanent, it cannot cease to be the same entity at another time, and so it cannot have been a hell-being.

To the thesis, that an independently existing self is not permanent, Candrakīrti presents two objections an opponent might present. The first objection is that in a sūtra Cakravartī says that in another birth he was a king called Māndhāta, which implies that a self that exists by itself is permanent. Candrakīrti replies that this was said in the sūtra in order to refute the thesis that a person-property self is many different selves, one for each life, rather than to establish the thesis that an independently existing self is permanent.

The second objection someone might make to the thesis, that an independently existing self is not permanent, is that when we identify a self in one birth with a self in another, we imply that a self is permanent. ("He is that one.") Candrakīrti's reply is simply to say that it is a mistake to interpret this statement as implying that a self is permanent. He assumes in this reply that the statement, that a self in one birth is the same as a self in another, is made from a conventional point of view, which does not imply that a self is permanent.

These examples call attention to the fact that neither Candrakīrti nor Nāgārjuna mean to be denying the convention that a self is the same entity in different lives. By convention, a self is the same entity in different lives in spite of acquiring different aggregates in each life. In this case, a self being the same entity at different times is unproblematic, since the efficacy of the statement that it is the same entity as different times is not based on the mistaken view that the past and present self exist by themselves, but on the fact that the statement performs a needed function.

In *Treatise* 27.4 Nāgārjuna considers a reply to his implication in *Treatise* 27.3 that an independently existing self is not permanent. The reply, made in the first line of *Treatise* 27.4 as "This is the same self," is that an independently existing past self is the same entity as an independently existing present self. Candrakīrti's commentary on *Treatise* 27.4 is as follows:

Clear Words *27.4*

But then it is said:

> *"This is the same self." If this is so,*
> *the things it has acquired are different [from it].*[66]

If a past self is the same [entity] as a present self, then the things acquired, the five aggregates, should not be different [as they are, from moment to moment] according to their defining properties, since the acquirer is not different when in its previous state. Therefore, [since the aggregates are different from moment to moment and a self is not,] that self is not the same as[67] what is acquired. (Indeed, what is acquired is different from the acquirer because object and agent of action are different.) Therefore, because a self is not other than what is acquired,[68] "This is the same self," is not correct.

You may think that what is acquired should be other [than what acquires it], and that a self is just one thing by itself. So, since a self [that exists in the present] is not other [a self that exists in the past], [you say that] "I existed." This [view] will certainly arise.

> *What sort of thing is your self,*
> *since it is totally separate from what is acquired?*

Certainly, if what is acquired is one thing and a self [that acquires it] is another, then because a self is not different from itself, what is acquired should be different [from a self that acquires it]. It is not possible to show this by making a distinction of following sort: "This is that self, and this is what is acquired by that [self]." It is not possible because [it is assumed that] a self has a svabhāva[69] that is distinguished [from the svabhāva of what it acquires] by [its activity of] acquiring [them. This is so] because a self being without a cause is one consequence and another is that a self would be conceived as separate. Since it is impossible to show that a self is totally separate from what it acquires, it is impossible to say that a self and what it acquires are different.

In *Treatise* 27.4a Candrakīrti uses "This is the same self" to represent the opponents' response to Nāgārjuna's claim, in *Treatise* 27.3, that an unacceptable

consequence of “I existed” is that an independently existing self is permanent. The opponents seem to think that the support of the convention that a self is the same self at different times is that there is a permanent independently existing self. Nāgārjuna’s reply amounts to pointing out that since its acquired aggregates are different at different times, this permanent independently existing self is other than the aggregates, and as other than the aggregates the acquirer of the aggregates would be unrelated to the aggregates it acquires, even though in fact a self is conceived in dependence upon being an acquirer of the aggregates. So the opponents cannot reply that “this is the same self” as a statement supported by an independently existing self being permanent.

In *Treatise* 27.4cd Nāgārjuna asks what sort of self it is that is other than the aggregates it acquires. In his commentary Candrakīrti argues that if his opponents should think that a self is in fact other than the aggregates it acquires, they do not understand what sort of self this is, since (i) a self that is other than the aggregates it acquires must be permanent (since they are impermanent), in which case it would not have a cause, and being without a cause is the mark of what does not exist, and (ii) a self that is other than the aggregates is not conceived in dependence upon the aggregates and a self is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. The implication of *Treatise* 27.4 that Candrakīrti uses to support 163 is that Nāgārjuna argues that a past self and a present self are not the same entity at different times. In *Treatise* 27.5 Nāgārjuna argues that since there is no independently existing self that exists apart from what it acquires, a self does not independent exist if it is what is acquired. Then he continues, arguing in *Treatise* 27.6 that what is acquired is not a self because what is acquired comes to be and passes away and a self does not and because what is acquired cannot be what acquires it.

Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.6 twice in the Commentary. He first quotes it in C128 and here again in C163. In C128 he quoted *Treatise* 27.6 to support his rejection of the Sāṃmitīyas’ sameness thesis. He assumed that it supports this rejection because in the verse Nāgārjuna asserts that the opponents cannot argue that the aggregates are a self, since in their view different aggregates come to be and pass away every moment, but a self other than the aggregates does not come to be and pass away every moment. Since Candrakīrti’s commentary on *Treatise* 27.6 has already been translated in my commentary on 128, readers are referred to its translation there if they wish to consult it again.

When Candrakīrti again cites *Treatise* 27.6 in C163 the use to which he puts it is to argue that because Nāgārjuna denies in the verse that over time a different self comes to be and passes away moment by moment, he accepts the view that by convention a self is not a different entity at different times.

Treatise 27.7 is quoted in Candrakīrti’s commentary on 124b in support of his thesis that there is no self that is other than the aggregates. This is what *Treatise* 27.7 asserts. In Candrakīrti’s commentary on 137cd, *Treatise* 27.8 is quoted to support his argument that it cannot be said that the aggregates acquired by a self can exist without a self that acquires them. Once again, this is what *Treatise* 27.8 asserts.

Treatise 27.12 is quoted in Candrakīrti's commentary on 163 in order to support the thesis in 163b that an independently existing self is not the same entity at different times. *Treatise* 27.12, of course, follows *Treatise* 27.10–11, which Candrakīrti cites in C128 to support his thesis that the aggregates are not a self. Candrakīrti said in C128cd that the aggregates are not a self because the aggregates being a self undermines the conventions that the results of an action are experienced by a self that performs the action and are not experienced by a different self. Although Nāgārjuna said this in *Treatise* 27.11, Candrakīrti also cites *Treatise* 27.10 because 27.11 is more easily understood in the context of following 27.10 and because it supports what he said in 128b. Candrakīrti's commentaries on *Treatise* 27.10–11 will not again be translated here, but readers can consult them to refresh their memories if they so wish. But I will once again translate *Treatise* 27.10–11 so that readers can examine the immediate context in which *Treatise* 27.12 occurs. *Treatise* 27.12 is cited here in the commentary on 163 to support the denial in 163b that an independently existing self is not the same entity at different times. I will then translate Candrakīrti's commentary on *Treatise* 27.12 so that readers can understand why he thinks that *Treatise* 27.12 can be quoted to support his denial that an independently existing self is not the same entity at different times.

If this [present self] were other [than a past self],
even though [the existence of] that [past self] is denied,
it [the present self] would exist. If this were so,
it would be born without having died.
[The karmic results of] actions would be totally destroyed or annihilated.
[The karmic results of] actions performed by one [self]
would be enjoyed by another.
There would be such consequences and more.

Clear Words *27.12*

Moreover, it might be thought here that this self is different from the past self, and because it did not exist before, it is born later. But this cannot be argued. So to provide an explanation, he says,

"If it did not exist [in the past], it could not be born."
Here an error occurs.
A self would then be an effect [produced by a cause]
or it would be born without a cause.

If a past self is born later, then a self is indeed an effect [produced by a cause]. But a self cannot be an effect [produced by a cause], since there is the consequence that it would be impermanent. Because there is no

> separate agent that produces it, how can it be right that a self is an effect [produced by a cause]? When it is thought that a self is an effect [produced by a cause], saṃsāra should then have a beginning and be the manifestation of a reality that does not previously exist. But this is not so. Therefore, a self is not an effect [produced by a cause].
>
> Furthermore, "it would be born without a cause." Because it did not exist in the past, the present self would be born without a cause. There is no past self; there can be no effect that is without a cause.
>
> The word, "or," [in the verse] is used in its inclusive sense. [It follows that] a self is an effect [produced by a cause], but if [as the opponents believe, it is true that] "I did not exist in the past," this [statement too] should not be accepted. It cannot be argued either that "it would be born without a cause" or that "I did not exist in the past." This should be understood.

The thesis placed in quotation marks in *Treatise* 27.12a is a statement that expresses the commitment of Nāgārjuna's opponents to the view that a present self that exists by itself could not be born unless there existed a past self that caused it to come to be. We need not assume that Nāgārjuna thinks that his opponents meant to have asserted this view. He surely thinks that they are committed to asserting the view because they asserted that a self that exists by itself is the same as the aggregates. He believes that the view they assert, that the aggregates are a self, implies that an independently existing self is caused to exist as a different self every moment by a past self that has ceased to exist before the new self comes to be. According to Candrakīrti, Nāgārjuna is arguing that if a present independently existing self is caused to exist by a past self that no longer exists at the time the present self comes to be, it comes to be without a cause, which is absurd. Candrakīrti explains that if a present independently existing self is an effect produced by a cause in the way the opponents believe the aggregates are, the convention that a different self does not come to be and pass away moment by moment is contradicted. Finally, Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 27.16 in C129ab in support of his rejection of the claim that the aggregates, which are said to be other than one another, exist by themselves in a causal continuum. His commentary on *Treatise* 27.16 is translated and explained in my commentary on 129.

…

Candrakīrti does not in C163 quote verses from the *Treatise* to support his denial in 163c that an independently existing self comes to be and passes away. But in C128a he cited *Treatise* 27.6 and 18.1ab in support of this denial. In *Treatise* 27.6 Nāgārjuna rejects the thesis that the things acquired by a self are a self because it has the consequence that a self would come to be and pass away as a different self, and in *Treatise* 18.1ab he rejects the thesis that the aggregates are a self for the same reason. Candrakīrti assumes here in C163c that Nāgārjuna

rejects the thesis that an independently existing self comes to be and passes away. An independently existing self cannot come to be and pass away, since doing so undermines the convention that a self continues to be a self while its aggregates constantly change. This convention is not to be undermined, of course, since it is presupposed in the Buddha's explanations of the problem of suffering and of its solution.

. . .

Treatise 22

Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 22.12–14 to support his denial, in 163c, that an independently existing self is permanent, impermanent, both, or neither. In *Treatise* 22 Nāgārjuna presents (i) a refutation of the independent existence of a Tathāgata during his last rebirth as an acquirer of the aggregates, (ii) refutations of the independent existence of his aggregates as the things he acquires, and (iii) the denials (a) that an independently existing Tathāgata is empty, not empty, both, or neither, (b) that an independently existing Tathāgata is permanent, impermanent, both, or neither, and (c) that after his last rebirth a Tathāgata independently exists, does not independently exist, both, or neither. Nāgārjuna concludes that those who make such statements about a Tathāgata are confused and that the intrinsic nature of a Tathāgata is his absence of independent existence.

In C144 Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 22.1, in which a Tathāgata is assumed to be a self. In the verse Nāgārjuna says that a Tathāgata does not exist by himself, since he is neither the same as the aggregates nor other than the aggregates, and that for this reason an independently existing Tathāgata is not that in which the aggregates are present, is not present in the aggregates, and does not possess the aggregates. Nāgārjuna assumes that a Tathāgata before his death is a self. In *Treatise* 22.2 Nāgārjuna argues that since a Tathāgata exists in dependence upon his aggregates, he does not exist independently and if he does not exist independently, he will not independently exist in dependence upon the nature of something else. In *Treatise* 22.3 Nāgārjuna argues that if a Tathāgata exists in dependence upon the nature of something else, he does not exist independently. How, he asks, could what does not exist by itself be a Tathāgata? In *Treatise* 22.4 he adds that since a Tathāgata does not exist by himself, there can be nothing that is other than him. Therefore, since he does not exist by himself and nothing is other than him, he cannot be said to be a Tathāgata.

Since Candrakīrti interprets *Treatise* 22.5 as Nāgārjuna responding to the theory of persons of the Pudgalavādins in its application to a Tathāgata, and *Treatise* 22.5 seems to be the only verse Candrakīrti interprets as Nāgārjuna's response to their theory, I will translate the verse and Candrakīrti's commentary on it.

Clear Words ***22.5***

> *If a certain Tathāgata were to exist*
> *without reliance upon the aggregates,*
> *then he would rely upon them now.*
> *And so he would exist in reliance upon them.*

> If you think that a Tathāgata is inexplicable with respect to being the same as or other than the aggregates, [but] is conceived in reliance upon the aggregates, how can this be so? If a certain Tathāgata were to exist before, without reliance upon the aggregates, without having taken hold of them, he would rely upon them [later for its existence]. Devadatta acquires wealth, though he was not wealthy before. Like this, if a certain Tathāgata were to exist without relying upon the aggregates, then he would rely upon them now [for his existence]. So, he would exist in reliance upon these aggregates.

The Pudgalavādins do in fact claim that an inexplicable Tathāgata (self) is conceived in reliance upon the aggregates. In Nāgārjuna's response to their theory he assumes that since the Pudgalavādins think that an inexplicable Tathāgata (self) exists apart from the aggregates, it can be said that by itself it does not acquire the aggregates. But then how can it become an acquirer of the aggregates? If it can become an acquirer of the aggregates, it is conceived in reliance upon the aggregates and if it is conceived in reliance upon the aggregates it cannot exist apart from the aggregates. The point of the analogy to Devadatta being wealthy after not being wealthy is that this is possible only because Devadatta does not exist by himself. Similarly, a Tathāgata can be an acquirer of the aggregates only if he does not exist by himself.

In *Treatise* 22.6 Nāgārjuna argues that since a Tathāgata exists in dependence upon the aggregates, it cannot be said that he acquires the aggregates in the way that Devadatta acquires wealth, which is by first not acquiring the aggregates, and then acquiring them, since there is no Tathāgata who does not acquire the aggregates. It is assumed that a Tathāgata is a self without person-properties that exists in dependence upon the aggregates because he is by definition the acquirer of the aggregates. In *Treatise* 22.7 Nāgārjuna argues that if what is acquired does not exist by itself, acquisition does not exist by itself, and if acquisition does not exist by itself, a Tathāgata does not exist by himself because being an acquirer of the aggregates is his nature as a self. The implication, of course, is that a Tathāgata does not exist unless the aggregates exist.

Nāgārjuna concludes, in *Treatise* 22.8, that since a Tathāgata who exists by himself cannot be related to the aggregates in any of the five ways listed in *Treatise* 22.1, he is not conceived in dependence upon acquiring the aggregates.[70] In *Treatise* 22.9 Nāgārjuna adds that since the acquired aggregates do not exist independently, they cannot be caused to come to be a self that is other than the aggregates.[71] In *Treatise* 22.10 he concludes that since both the things acquired

and their acquirer are empty, a Tathāgata who exists by himself cannot be conceived in dependence upon the things he acquires.

Nāgārjuna has now laid the foundation upon which he makes a series of claims in the following verses in which he argues that it cannot be said of a Tathāgata who exists by himself that he does, does not, both does and does not, or neither does nor does not possess the different properties Nāgārjuna mentions in these verses. Hence, in *Treatise* 22.11 Nāgārjuna says that it cannot be said that a Tathāgata who exists by himself is empty, not empty, both, or neither, since there is no Tathāgata who exists by himself. Nāgārjuna adds that when it is said that a Tathāgata is empty, not empty, both, or neither, these things are said of him for the purposes of conforming to the conventional ways in which things are conceived, not because the things of which these things are said exist by themselves.

Nāgārjuna then presents *Treatise* 22.12–4, which Candrakīrti quotes in C163. According to *Treatise* 22.12 it is not to be said that a Tathāgata who exists independently is permanent, impermanent, both, or neither. According to *Treatise* 22.13 if one says that a Tathāgata exists by himself while alive, one will be forced to say that he does not exist at all when he dies. According to *Treatise* 22.14 it cannot be said of an independently existing Tathāgata that he does, does not, both does and does not, or neither does nor does not exist after his death, since he does not exist independently. The chapter ends (i) with the claim in *Treatise* 22.15 that those who attribute such properties to a Tathāgata fail to understand his true intrinsic nature, which is his absence of independent existence, and (ii) with the claim in *Treatise* 27.16 that we and a Tathāgata possess the same intrinsic nature, which is the absence of independent existence.

. . .

In support of his claim in 163c that a self "is not permanent, and so forth," Candrakīrti quotes three verses from *Treatise* 22. Since the verses from the *Treatise* he quotes make reference to the twelve unanswered questions, it is clear that in 163 "permanent, and so forth" is meant to include all twelve. Since it is assumed that a Tathāgata that exists by himself does not exist, none of these questions, when asked about him, can be answered.

Candrakīrti's commentaries on these verses are as follows.

Clear Words *22.12–14*

> Not only do the four, being empty, and so forth, not apply to a Tathāgata, but also:
>
> *How can the four, being permanent, impermanent,*
> *and so forth, apply to One Who Is at Peace?*
> *How can the four, having an end, not having an end, and so*
> *forth,*
> *apply to One Who Is at Peace?"*

Here the fourteen things unexplained by the Bhagavān are elaborated. "The world of sentient beings is permanent, impermanent, both, and neither." These are four. "The world of sentient beings does have an end, does not have an end, both, and neither." This is the second [group of four]. "A Tathāgata exists after death, does not exist after death, both, and neither." This is the third [group of four]. [The last two are] "the individual is [the same as] a body and the individual is other than a body." All of these fourteen things are called "things unexplained" because they are not explained. Previously [in *Treatise* 22.11], the four, being empty, and so forth, were shown not to apply to a Tathāgata by means of the logical explanation that a Tathāgata, One Who Is at Peace, is without a svabhāva. So here also, the four, being permanent, impermanent, and so forth, do not apply. And because they do not apply [to anything], the four, in relation to the world of sentient beings, are not explained by the Bhagavān, just as the dark or fair [complexion] of the son of a barren woman [being dark or fair complexioned does not apply to anything]. And just as these four do not apply to a Tathāgata, in the same way also having an end, not having an end, and so forth do not apply to a Tathāgata, One Who Is at Peace.

In order to address the impossibility of the four mistaken thoughts that a Tathāgata exists after death, and so forth, he now says that

> *He who has a firm apprehension*
> *of the existence of a Tathāgata*
> *will think that when he has obtained [pari]nirvāṇa*
> *he does not exist.*

He who has dogmatically taken a firm hold on the apprehension of the existence of a mentally constructed Tathāgata, must also imagine that even though a Tathāgata who has attained parinirvāṇa exists, he does not exist after death [in the sense that either] a Tathāgata does not exist at a later time after death or is destroyed [when he dies]. A Tathāgata does not exist. For one who has this mistaken thought, a mistaken view is generated.

But one who [believes that] a Tathāgata does not possess the definite state of existence or non-existence because he is without a svabhāva will hold the view that

> *Since he is, according to his svabhāva, empty,*
> *the thought should definitely not arise:*
> *"After having achieved cessation,*
> *the Buddha exists or does not exist."*

Like the thought that there is a picture of a body in the clouds,[72] this thought is not true. This is the intent.

In his explanation of *Treatise* 22.12 Candrakīrti says, first of all, that the fourteen things that cannot be said of a Tathāgata are the things that the Buddha left unexplained when asked about a Tathāgata and other things. Second, he says that although not all of the things the Buddha left unexplained concern a Tathāgata, they also apply to a Tathāgata, since the questions about these other things were not answered because they, like a Tathāgata who exists by himself and a son of a barren woman, do not exist at all. Just as it cannot be said of a son of a barren woman that he possesses a dark or fair complexion, since he does not exist at all, so it cannot be said of a Tathāgata and these other things that exist independently, that they are or are not permanent, and so forth, since they do not exist at all.

In his commentary on *Treatise* 22.13 Candrakīrti says that the belief that a Tathāgata exists independently leads to the belief that he does not exist after he dies. He does not explain why this is so or why the belief, that an independently existing Tathāgata ceases to exist after his death, is an unacceptable consequence. That an independently existing Tathāgata ceases to exist after his death is an unacceptable consequence because by convention and apart from analysis, it is not true that at the end of a Tathāgata's last rebirth he ceases to exist. In this case, the error seems not only to arise from the identification of the existence of a Tathāgata with unqualified existence, but also from the identification of his final rebirth with his final existence as a sentient being, since it is his death at the end of that particular rebirth that is identified with his total nonexistence. The problem is created by the assumption that something either exists by itself or does not exist at all. By contrast, the explanation of the error in the belief, that a Tathāgata does not cease to exist at the time of his death, is that if he exists by himself, a Tathāgata cannot cease to exist. This is not, however, the reason that it is true that a Tathāgata does not cease to exist when he dies.

Candrakīrti says that in *Treatise* 27.14 Nāgārjuna explains the view that avoids the errors of thinking that a Tathāgata ceases to exist when he dies, does not cease to exist when he dies, both, or neither. It is the view that since analysis shows that a Tathāgata does not exist by himself, yet does not unqualifiedly not exist, it cannot be said of a Tathāgata who exists by himself that he does or does not exist after death, both, or neither. It is only from a conventional point of view, in which discourse is used on the basis of its causal efficacy, that it can be said of a Tathāgata that, from an ultimate point of view, he does not exist by himself. Nāgārjuna's answer to the puzzle about how we can conceive what does not exist by itself is that it is possible because what does not exist by itself can be conceived dependently. It is impossible, however, if what does not exist by itself is not dependently conceived, since in that case there is nothing to which our words can refer.

Treatise 18

To show that his thesis of 163d, that a self is neither the same as the aggregates nor other than the aggregates, correctly represents the teaching of Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 18.1.

> *If a self were the aggregates,*
> *it would come to be and pass away.*
> *If it were other than the aggregates,*
> *it would be without the defining properties of the aggregates.*

In C128b Candrakīrti quoted *Treatise* 18.1ab to show that Nāgārjuna says that an independently existing self does not come to be and pass away. In C124d he quoted *Treatise* 18.1cd to show that Nāgārjuna says that a self other than the aggregates does not exist. It is indeed fitting that this quotation from *Treatise* 18.1 is cited once again in 163, near the end of Candrakīrti's account of the selflessness of persons, since it is epitomizes his refutation of the independent existence of a self. Since his commentary on *Treatise* 18.1 summarizes this refutation, it is quoted in full here. Much of what he says is drawn from what he had said in the Commentary.

Clear Words *18.1*

> If mental afflictions, actions, bodies, agents, and the results [of actions] do not exist, but are like a celestial city, yet, while not existing, appear to children[73] to possess the form of reality, then what is the way things are? And how does one enter into the way things are?[74]
>
> We say that the way things are is the complete absence of conceiving a self and conceiving its possessions with respect to inner and outer phenomena[75] when inner and outer things are not perceived.[76] With regard to entering into the way things are, [we say that]
>
> > *When a meditator realizes that all mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra],*
> > *without exception, arise because of the transient collection view*
> > *and has understood that a self is the object of this [view],*
> > *he composes a refutation of the existence of a self.*
>
> This [quotation] is from the *Introduction to the Middle Way*, which goes into great detail [on the subject].[77]
>
> A meditator understands that the root of saṃsāra is the [transient] collection [view], and because he does not apprehend a self, he abandons the transient collection view. Because he abandons that [view], all

mental afflictions pass away. So the meditator examines the aforementioned self, [asking] what is this self? It is the object of the conception of a self. As the object of the conception of a self, it must [if it exists] either possess the conventional nature of the aggregates or be other than the aggregates. The theses that it is the same as them and that it is other than them are included in theses such as that it is that in which they are present and that they are that in which it is present. So since he wanted to include them here in a concise way, the teacher presents a refutation of the existence of self by opposing the theses of sameness and otherness.[78]

If a self were the aggregates,
it would come to be and pass away.
If it were other than the aggregates,
it would be without the defining properties of the aggregates.

"In the examinations of a Tathāgata [in *Treatise* 22] and of fire and fuel [in *Treatise* 10] five theses are introduced. Why then is it otherwise here?" The answer is that in those two chapters, five theses are explained. Since he explained them there, they are not explained again here. For the sake of conciseness of expression, [just] two theses are now presented.[79]

If a self is considered to be the aggregates, then it [should be said that it] comes to be and passes away, since the aggregates come to be and pass away. But this is not acceptable because the [unacceptable] consequence is that a self is not one.[80] Nāgārjuna will indeed say [at *Treatise* 27.12] that

"If it did not exist [in the past], it could not be born."
Here an error occurs.
A self would then be an effect [produced by a cause]
or it would be born without a cause.[81]

and [at *Treatise* 27.6] that

What is acquired is certainly not a self;
for that comes to be and passes away.
How indeed will what is acquired
become what acquires it?[82]

Moreover [as is said in 127–8],

If the aggregates are a self, it follows that
because they are many, a self too would become many [selves].

A self would be a substance, and because it would be regarded as a substance,
the mistaken view of it [as a substance] would not be mistaken.
When nirvāṇa is obtained, a self would certainly pass away.
During the moments prior to obtaining nirvāṇa it would come to be and pass away.
Since the agent of action does not exist, neither would the result of its action.
[The result of] what is done by one would be experienced by another.

These theses are to be understood from the discussion in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*, which goes into great detail [on the subject]. So a lengthy explanation is not offered here.

This much is clear: a self is not the aggregates. Nor is it other than the aggregates. For if a self should be other than the aggregates, it would not possess the defining properties of the aggregates. Just as a cow, since other than a horse, cannot possess the defining properties of a horse, so also, a self, since it is considered to be other than the aggregates, cannot [be said to] possess the defining properties of the aggregates. Now since the aggregates are causally conditioned, they arise from causes and conditions and possess the defining properties of coming to be, being and passing away.[83] It follows that if a self does not possess the defining properties of the aggregates, it is unrelated to coming to be, being and ceasing to be. But if this were so, either it would be without existence, like a flower in the sky, or be causally unconditioned, like nirvāṇa. Nor could it reasonably be said to be the object of the conception of a self. So it is also not correct to say that a self is other than the aggregates.[84]

Here is a different meaning [the verse may have]. If a self were other than the aggregates, it would not possess the defining properties of the aggregates. The five aggregates are the things whose defining properties are to be bodily form, to experience or feel, to apprehend discriminable forms, to be volitional forces and to be aware of objects.[85] If a self is asserted to be other than the aggregates in the way consciousness [is asserted to be other] than bodily form, it will be shown to have different properties. It would also be shown to possess different defining properties in the same way that mind and bodily form [are shown to possess different defining properties]. But it has not been shown. So it is not other than the aggregates.

It may be objected that since the Tīrthikas are convinced that a self is other than the aggregates and they say that its defining properties are different [from theirs], this way of thinking does no harm to their view.

The way in which the Tīrthikas say that the defining properties of a self are different is explained [at 6.121] in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*:

> *There are Tīrthikas who have supposed that a self is an enjoyer,*
> *is permanent, and is without agency, constituents or motion.*
> *In dependence upon slight variations of this [theory],*
> *Tīrthikas have developed different systems of thought.*

We say that the Tīrthikas indeed really do claim that the defining properties [of a self] are other than [those of any of] the aggregates. But they state [what] its defining properties [are] in spite of not having found a self that possesses a svabhāva[86] [by virtue of which it exists]. Why so? They do not realize that a self is just a conception[87] because they do not properly understand the meaning of being something dependently conceived.[88] So out of fear [that a self does not exist] they have also fallen away from conventional reality. Because of the conceptualizing activity of the mind they are deceived by the mere appearance of a correct inference. So they mentally construct a self because of delusion and make a statement of [what] its defining properties [are]. In the examination of agent and actions [in *Treatise* 8] and elsewhere a refutation is also presented, with the help of convention, by citing the principle of the mutual dependence of a self and its acquisitions.[89] So it was said [in a sūtra]:

> *In dependence upon a mirror,*
> *a reflection of one's own face is seen, is it not?*
> *But, that [face in the mirror] does not at all*
> *exist in reality [as one's own face].*
> *Just like this, in dependence upon the aggregates,*
> *a self is conceived.*[90]
> *Just like the reflection of one's own face [in a mirror],*
> *this [self] is nothing in reality.*
>
> *Without dependence upon a mirror,*
> *one does not see the reflection of one's own face;*
> *likewise, without dependence upon the aggregates,*
> *one does not see a self.*
> *Because the noble Ānanda heard this teaching,*
> *he acquired the eye of dharma.*
> *And he himself spoke of it*
> *again and again to the bhikṣus.*[91]

So no effort is made here to teach that again. According to those who desire nirvāṇa, [a self] being dependently conceived[92] is the basis of

> attachment to a self for those who are deceived by ignorance. Its five aggregates appear because it acquires them. Does a self possess or not possess the defining properties of the aggregates? Those who desire nirvāṇa, who examine it from all angles, do not find that a self is a thing with a svabhāva.[93]

The only part of this commentary not included already in Candrakīrti's commentaries on 120–62 is the use of the analogy between a self and a reflection of one's face in a mirror. He says that a self, which does not exist by itself, is conceived in dependence upon aggregates in the way that a face in a mirror, which also does not exist by itself as a face, exists in dependence upon the mirror. A self, like a face in a mirror, is something that appears to exist in a way that it does not. The analogy, of course, is not meant to suggest that there is a self whose false image is cast upon the aggregates, as there is a face whose false image of being a face is reflected in the mirror. What the analogy is meant to suggest is that a dependently conceived self appears to be a self existing by itself in the aggregates, like a reflection of a face appears to be a face existing by itself in the mirror. In other parts of the *Commentary* such comparisons are made to illustrate that phenomena other than persons that do not exist by themselves are conceived as existing by themselves. Such comparisons are often used by the Buddha himself because they are easier to understand than the analysis that shows the truth of the comparisons. However, these comparisons are not to be taken literally, since they are comparisons to contaminated phenomena that are by convention not the phenomena they appear to be.

The subject of *Treatise* 18 is self and its ultimate reality. In *Treatise* 18.1–4 Nāgārjuna sets out the basic argument that establishes the selflessness of persons and tells us that eliminating the conception of a self and its possessions enables us to free ourselves from the sufferings of saṃsāra. In *Treatise* 18.5, he explains why the realization of the selflessness of persons can free us from the sufferings of saṃsāra. In *Treatise* 18.6 he says that the Buddha used discourse to talk about a self, yet denied both that a self exists by itself and that selflessness exists by itself. He explains what this means in *Treatise* 18.7–10. In *Treatise* 18.11–12 he says that this teaching has been given by the Buddhas for our benefit and that even when Buddhas and Śravakas have stopped appearing in this world, the teaching will still appear in it in the form of the wisdom of the Pratyekabuddhas, who retain the teachings received in prior rebirths.

In *Treatise* 18.1 Nāgārjuna argues that a self does not exist independently because it is neither the same as nor other than the aggregates in dependence upon which it is conceived. In *Treatise* 18.2 he points out that if a self does not exist by itself, its possessions do not exist by themselves, and that if we fully realize that neither a self nor its possessions exist independently, we will no longer grasp at their existence by themselves. In *Treatise* 18.3 Nāgārjuna says that neither the person who abandons these conceptions nor the person who understands that another has abandoned them exists independently. In *Treatise* 18.4 he says that

when these conceptions are abandoned, the aggregates are no longer acquired, and when the aggregates are no longer acquired, rebirth is abandoned.

In *Treatise* 18.5 Nāgārjuna explains how the realization of emptiness eliminates rebirth. He assumes that the realization that neither a self nor what it possesses exists by itself encompasses the realization that no phenomenon exists by itself. Conceiving a self and its possessions gives rise to actions contaminated by the mental afflictions and contaminated actions give rise to rebirth in saṃsāra. The ultimate cause of our rebirth is the conceptualizing activity of the mind, which gives rise to conceiving a self and its possessions. Hence, in *Treatise* 18.5 Nāgārjuna says

> *Freedom*[94] *arises from the cessation of actions and mental afflictions,*
> *actions and mental afflictions from thought,*[95]
> *this [thought] from the conceptualizing activity of the mind,*[96]
> *which ceases in [the realization of] emptiness.*[97]

Candrakīrti's illuminating commentary on this verse is translated here, since it explains his account of the selflessness of persons in the Commentary. Included also is a translation of his commentary on *Treatise* 18.4, which explains how the rebirth process is brought to an end through wisdom. Omitted from my translation is Candrakīrti's extended account of what he believes to be Bhāvaviveka's erroneous view that Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas do not fully realize emptiness.[98] Here is his commentary on *Treatise* 18.4:

Clear Words *18.4*

> In a sūtra it was said:
>
> > *All of these [mental afflictions and the faults of saṃsāra] have their root in, are caused by, and come to be completely from, the transient collection view*.[99]
>
> When a self and things possessed by a self are not found, this [transient] collection [view] is abandoned. And when that is abandoned, then also there is the abandonment of four things that are acquired: desires for bodily pleasure, wrong views, wrong adherence to vows, and conceiving a self. And from the abandonment of these acquired things there is the cessation of birth characterized by recurrent births.

The four things that Candrakīrti mentions in *Clear Words* 18.4 are abandoned as a result of the transient collection view being abandoned are one of the Buddha's classifications of the mental afflictions that are abandoned when the transient collection view is abandoned. Candrakīrti's commentary on *Treatise* 18.5a is as follows.

Clear Words *18.5*

> This being so, the step-by-step withdrawal from birth [in saṃsāra] is now presented.
>
> > *Freedom arises from the cessation of actions and mental afflictions.*
>
> If the acquisitions have ceased to be there can be no becoming[100] that depends upon them. When becoming has been obstructed, how can there be birth, old age, death and the like? Thus it is established that nirvāṇa results from the cessation of actions and mental afflictions.

Candrakīrti explains how the cessation of mentally afflicted actions effectively interrupts and stops the twelve recurrent stages of the dependent arising of birth, old age, death, and the other faults of saṃsāra. Nāgārjuna explains this process in *Treatise* 26.[101] Candrakīrti says that the Buddha taught that nirvāṇa results from the cessation of mental afflictions and the actions contaminated by the mental afflictions. Nirvāṇa is the absence of the sufferings of saṃsāra. Candrakīrti now begins his explanation of *Treatise* 18.5bcd:

> The total cessation of actions and mental afflictions results from the cessation of what? This needs to be explained. It is said:
>
> > *Actions and mental afflictions arise from thought, and*
> > *this [thought] from the conceptualizing activity of the mind,*
> > *which ceases in [the realization of] emptiness.*
>
> An ordinary ignorant person's mental afflictions, such as desire and the others, arise from the baseless thinking of phenomena.[102] He will explain [this in *Treatise* 23.1]:
>
> > *Attachment, aversion and delusion are said*
> > *to arise from thought.*
> > *They arise in dependence upon*
> > *the pleasant, the unpleasant and mistaken views.*
>
> And it was said in a sūtra:
>
> > *O desire! I know your source!*
> > *You are indeed born of thought.*
> > *I will not seek you out.*
> > *Then you will cease to exist for me.*

> Thus actions and mental afflictions continue to arise from thought. Thought, because of participation in beginningless saṃsāra, arises from the multi-faceted conceptualizing activity of the mind, which is characterized by [conceiving] knowledge and its objects, words and their meanings, agents and their actions, causes and their effects, pots and cloth, crowns and chariots, bodily forms and feelings, men and women, success and failure, happiness and sorrow, honor and dishonor, censure and praise, and other such things.

Candrakīrti here supports the thesis that the mental afflictions arise from thought by quoting *Treatise* 23.1 and a verse from scripture. In *Treatise* 18.5a "thought" is used to refer to the result of conceptualizing activity of the mind. It is the world of conceived objects. Candrakīrti calls thought "baseless" because its objects do not exist by themselves.

When Candrakīrti enumerates things included in the conceptualizing activity of the mind, he includes conceiving knowledge and its objects, words and their meanings, agents and their actions, causes and their effects, pots, cloth, crowns and chariots, bodily forms and feelings, men and women, and failure, happiness and sorrow, honor and dishonor, and censure and praise. There seems to be no special significance either to this particular enumeration of what is included in the conceptualizing activity of the mind or to the order in which they occur, but they do include what we might suppose to be significant families of reified dependently conceived objects and objects to which the Buddha refers when explaining reification.

Candrakīrti continues by commenting on *Treatise* 18.5d as follows:

> But the conceptualizing activity of the mind cannot exist in [the experience of] emptiness because [at that time] nothing is seen that possesses a svabhāva.[103] How so? When objects are conceived, the aforementioned net of the conceptualizing activity of the mind arises.
>
> Since those who are filled with passion [for beautiful young girls] do not think that the daughter of a barren woman is a beautiful young girl, they do not cause such an object to arise in the world created by their minds. [Similarly,] those who do not cause objects that falsely appear like this to arise do not erroneously cause thought to arise. Since they have not caused the web of [these] thoughts to arise, they do not produce the assemblage of mental afflictions that have as their root the [transient] collection view that arises from [the mind] dwelling on a self and things possessed by a self.
>
> Since they have not produced the assemblage of mental afflictions that are of the conventional nature of the [transient] collection view, they do not perform actions that are either skillful or unskillful. Since they have not performed [such] actions, they do not experience the wild nature of saṃsāra, which is a single net comprised of birth, old age, death, loss, lamentation, sorrow, despair, depression, and other such things.

Candrakīrti explains *Treatise* 18.5d by saying that when emptiness is experienced, actions contaminated by the mental afflictions cannot arise, since actions contaminated by the mental afflictions arise from thought, which arises from the conceptualizing activity of the mind, which is abandoned when emptiness is realized. When he says that nothing is seen that possesses a svabhāva when emptiness is experienced, this means that at that time there is no apprehension of conceived objects. This does not mean, however, that conceived objects, which include mind and emptiness as conceived, do not exist at all. Objects conceived exist according to the worldly established convention that what exists is what exists in dependence upon something else.

Candrakīrti compares those who, because they experience emptiness, do not give rise to thought, to those who, because they do not think that the daughter of a barren woman is a beautiful young girl, do not think that she is a beautiful young girl. For this reason, he says, they do not generate a desire for her. He uses the comparison to point out that since the mental afflictions do not arise for those who see emptiness, their minds at that time "do not produce the assemblage of mental afflictions." He adds that these mental afflictions "have as their root the [transient] collection view that arises from [the mind] dwelling on a self and things possessed by a self." Here he repeats his claim, made in 120 and its commentary, that the transient collection view gives rise to "all mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra]."

Candrakīrti believes that the mind creates its objects by dependently conceiving them. Included among dependently conceived objects are things produced by its volitions or mental actions. As things conceived, the objects of the mind exist in dependence upon being conceived in relation to objects conceived in dependence upon them. As dependently conceived things produced by volition, the objects of the mind exist in dependence upon the nature of the volition and the law of actions and their results. Because the ignorant mind creates dependently conceived objects as a result of actions performed in the past, the sufferings of saṃsāra are perpetuated. The way to stop this process is to train the mind to experience the ultimate reality of its objects, since this experience prevents the arising of the false appearance of objects possessing independent existence and enables us to become free of attachment to that appearance as their ultimate reality.

Candrakīrti continues:

> If meditators are established in the seeing of emptiness, they do not find the existence of any of the aggregates, elements, spheres or sense objects. Since they do not find things that have a svabhāva, they do not cause the objects that falsely appear to exist to appear [before their minds]. Since they do not cause objects that falsely appear to exist to arise, they do not cause thought to occur. Since they do not cause thought to occur, they do not produce the assemblage of mental afflictions that have as their root the transient collection [view] that arises

from [the mind] dwelling on a self and things possessed by a self. Since they have not produced the assemblage of mental afflictions, beginning with the [transient] collection view, they do not perform actions [contaminated by the mental afflictions]. They do not experience saṃsāra, which is characterized by birth, old age and death, since they do not perform actions [contaminated by the mental afflictions]. Therefore, since they have seen emptiness, which is characterized by the gentle subsiding of all the conceptualizing activity of the mind, there is [for them] an exit from the world of falsely appearing objects upon which the entire web of thought is based.

The cessation of thought results from the conceptualizing activity of the mind having been abandoned. The cessation of all actions and mental afflictions results from the cessation of thought. The cessation of birth results from the cessation of actions and mental afflictions. Therefore, only [the realization of] emptiness is said to be nirvāṇa, since it is characterized by the cessation of the conceptualizing activity of the mind. So it was said in the *Four Hundred* [12.23].

The Tathāgatas succinctly state
that not harming others is the teaching
and that emptiness is nirvāṇa.
Only these two are here.

In these final remarks Candrakīrti reviews the sequence of phenomena that cease to arise when emptiness is realized, and he quotes Āryadeva's succinct statement of the Buddha's teachings: we are not to harm others and emptiness is nirvāṇa. If we follow the first teaching we can avoid bad rebirths. The second teaching means that ultimate reality and nirvāṇa are not other than one another, though conceptually distinguished, since conceived from two different perspectives, as object and mind assimilated to its object.

. . .

Treatise 10

Candrakīrti also quotes *Treatise* 10.1 to support that his claim in 163d that a self is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates. In C137b he quoted *Treatise* 10.1ab and 10.15 to support the claim that a self and its acquisitions are not one thing. In *Treatise* 10.1ab, it is said that if fire is fuel, an agent and object of action would be one thing. These lines Candrakīrti uses to support the thesis that an agent and object of action are not the same thing. In *Treatise* 10.15 it is said that the relation between a self and the aggregates can be explained in the way the relation between fire and fuel is explained. So in C137b Candrakīrti uses *Treatise* 10.15 to support the claim that what was said of fire and fuel in *Treatise*

10.1ab is also true of a self and the aggregates. In my commentary on 137b Candrakīrti's commentary on *Treatise* 10.15 was not explained so that its explanation could be included here.

Since Nāgārjuna says in *Treatise* 10.15 that the relation between a self and the aggregates can be explained in the way the relation between fire and fuel is explained, I will summarize Nāgārjuna's use of this comparison. In my summary of this chapter I will call attention to the similarities between Nāgārjuna's arguments in *Treatise* 10 for the thesis that fire and fuel do not exist by themselves and the arguments used by Candrakīrti to support the thesis that a self and the aggregates do not exist by themselves.

In *Treatise* 10 Nāgārjuna replies to an objection to the thesis of *Treatise* 9. The thesis of *Treatise* 9 to which there is the objection is that a perceiver and its perception do not exist apart from one another because they are conceived in dependence upon one another. The objection to the thesis is that the fact that a perceiver and his perception are conceived in dependence upon one another does not show that they are not separate in existence, since even though fire and fuel are conceived in dependence upon one another, they possess different defining properties. Since the defining property of fire is heat and the defining property of fuel is the capacity to be burned, according to the objection, they do not exist in dependence upon one another. Nāgārjuna's reply to this objection, as the quotation used in the commentary on 163d states, is that fire is not the same as fuel, since agent and object of action are not one thing, and that they are not different, since fire cannot exist without fuel.

In C163d Candrakīrti uses *Treatise* 10.1 to support the thesis of 163d, that a self is neither the same as nor other than the aggregates. He only quotes the initial few words of the verse because he assumes that his readers know the verse he is quoting. His *Clear Words* commentary on *Treatise* 10.1 is translated here so readers may confirm for themselves the account of the verse provided above.

Clear Words *10.1*

> Here one says, "It was said that just as agent and object of action do not possess a svabhāva,[104] neither do an acquirer and what is acquired. But this is not correct, since even things dependent [on others] are seen to possess a svabhāva, just as fire exists in dependence upon fuel, but is not without a svabhāva, since it is found through its effects, such as the capacity to warm or burn, which possess a svabhāva. Likewise, fuel exists in dependence upon fire, but is not without a svabhāva, since the four great elements possess a svabhāva. Likewise, an acquirer will possess a svabhāva in dependence upon its acquisition and its acquisition in dependence upon an acquirer; these two, an acquirer and its acquisition, will be like fire and fuel." So it is said.
>
> This would be true if fire and fuel both exist, but they do not. Why? If in this case fire and fuel both exist, then surely they should exist

either as one or as other than one another. Either way, this is not correct. So he says:

> *If fire is fuel,*
> *the agent and object of action are one.*
> *If fire is other than fuel,*
> *it should exist without fuel.*

In this verse, that which is [said to be] ignited is fuel, which is combustible materials such as wooden sticks and other such things. The agent of its combustion is fire. In this case, if it is thought that fire is fuel, then agent and object of actions should be one. But this is not seen [to be so] because the consequence would be that potter and a pot are one, or a woodcutter and what he cuts [are one], and this is not generally believed to be so. Now otherness is indeed [in] the same [situation]: if fire is other than fuel, fire should exist without fuel. There is no cloth, which is other than a pot, that is not seen as being independent of that. But it is not in the same way true that there is no fire, [which is other than fuel,] that is [not seen as being] independent of fuel.

When Candrakīrti likens the relation between fire and fuel to the relations between a potter and a pot and a woodcutter and the wood he cuts, he is supporting the principle he uses in his argument for the thesis that a fire cannot be the fuel upon which it acts by providing other examples of the principle. The principle is that by convention an agent of action and object of its action cannot be the same. The point of his comparing what is true of cloth and a pot to what is not true of fire and fuel is clear, even though convoluted, and only partially expressed in the Sanskrit. He is saying that because a cloth exists apart from a pot, it is not believed to exist in dependence upon a pot, but because fire does not exist apart from fuel, it is believed to exist in dependence upon fuel.

In *Treatise* 10.2 Nāgārjuna points out four unacceptable consequences of the view that fire is other than fuel, and in *Treatise* 10.3 he shows how these consequences are related to one another. If fire is other than fuel in the way cloth is other than a pot, (i) it would burn eternally, (ii) it could not be ignited, (iii) attempts to start it would be pointless, and (iv) it could not burn anything. In short, fire could not perform its function. In 122 the unacceptable consequence Candrakīrti draws from the Tīrthikas' thesis, that a self is other than the aggregates, is that a self would not exist because never born.

In *Treatise* 10.4 Nāgārjuna responds to the idea that since fire is not other than fuel, it must be the fuel when it is burning. His response to the idea is that its consequence is that there is no agent that burns the fuel. The parallel idea is that since a self is not other than the aggregates, it must be the aggregates when they are functioning to produce person-properties. Candrakīrti responds, similarly, by saying that in this case there is no acquirer of the acquired aggregates.

In *Treatise* 10.5–7 Nāgārjuna presents further objections to the thesis that fire and fuel are other than one another. If they are other than one another, they do not make contact, and if they do not make contact, fuel is not burned. So if the fuel is burning, it will burn forever. So fire and fuel must make contact and their existence must be mutually dependent. Candrakīrti could have argued that there are similar consequences for a self and the aggregates being other than one another.

In *Treatise* 10.8–10 Nāgārjuna argues that fire and fuel do not exist by themselves because they exist in dependence upon one another. If they exist by themselves, they must exist at different times or at the same time, and in neither case can one exist in dependence upon the other. He argues that if they exist at different times, neither exists in dependence upon the other, since one would exist without the other, which is not possible, and if they exist at the same time, neither can exist because they exist in dependence upon one another.

There is no argument in Candrakīrti's Commentary analogous to the argument of *Treatise* 10.8–10. The reason an analogous argument is not used is easily explained. In the Commentary, Candrakīrti is presenting an account of the selflessness of persons that can be used in meditation to refute the independent existence of a self, and this is best accomplished without the complication of explicitly arguing, in addition, that aggregates exist in dependence upon a self.

In *Treatise* 10.11 Nāgārjuna argues that phenomena that exist in dependence upon one another cannot be said not to exist, since they dependently exist, or to exist independently, since they would then not dependently exist. In *Treatise* 10.12 he argues that if neither fire nor fuel exists at all they do not exist in dependence upon one another, and if they exist in dependence upon one another, neither exists independently. Nonetheless, by convention and apart from analysis fire and fuel exist in dependence upon one another. Similarly, by convention and apart from analysis a self and the aggregates exist in dependence upon one another in spite of the fact that neither a self nor the aggregates independently exist.

In *Treatise* 10.13 Nāgārjuna presents an objection to the thesis that fire and fuel exist independently because fire is observed burning fuel. His objection is that if fire and fuel exist independently, fire does not arise from fuel and is not present in fuel, since fire and fuel would then be unrelated to one another, like cloth and a pot, and the objections he presented in *Treatise* 2 to the independent existence of motion can also be used to show that they do not exist independently. By analogy, the thesis might be put forward that a self and the aggregates exist independently because a self is observed acquiring aggregates, and the corresponding objection to the thesis would be that if a self and the aggregates exist independently, a self does not acquire aggregates and the aggregates are not acquired by a self, since a self and the aggregates would be unrelated to one another.

In *Treatise* 10.14 Nāgārjuna summarizes what has been shown in the chapter in a way that exactly parallels the conclusion Candrakīrti draws in 150 and its commentary:

Fire is not fuel.
Fire is not other than fuel.
Fire does not possess fuel.
Fuel is not present in fire and fire is not present in fuel.

Finally, in *Treatise* 10.15 Nāgārjuna says that his account of the relation between fire and fuel, as explained in *Treatise* 10.14, can be used to understand the relation between a self and the aggregates and between other things. First Candrakīrti comments on *Treatise* 10.15abc and then on *Treatise* 10.15d as follows:

Clear Words *10.15*

In the same way that fire, when examined in the five ways, cannot exist, so also a self [cannot exist when examined in the five ways]. Explaining this he says:

Every relation between a self
and [its] acquisitions
is fully explained by reference to fire and fuel.

The acquisitions are the things acquired: the five acquired aggregates. The acquirer conceives acquisitions in dependence upon aggregates. It brings them into existence and conceives them. It is called a self. Because it is the object of the conception of a self, the sense of being a self that arises is included in this. Every relation that establishes [the mutually dependent existence of] a self and [its] acquisitions is explained, and is fully understood, by reference to fire and fuel.[105]

It is not correct that the acquisitions are a self, since the consequence is that agent and object of action would be one. Nor are the acquisitions one thing and the acquirer another, since the consequence is that a self would be perceived as different from the aggregates. Alternatively, [it can be said that] there are consequences such as that it would be unrelated to anything else. Since their sameness and otherness have been refuted, a self does not possess aggregates. Because they are not other [than one another], the aggregates are not present in a self, nor is a self present in the aggregates. Since there is no reality for a self in any of the five ways, it follows that, like an agent and object of action, there is a proof that a self and its acquisitions are mutually dependent. This is certain.

That relation between a self and its acquisitions is [applicable] not only to these two, since [he adds that]:

along with pots, cloth and so forth.

> It is to be understood from this statement that [he means] all things without exception. "Pots, [cloth] and so forth" include cause and effect, parts and possessor of parts, defining properties and what is defined, and properties and possessor of properties. In this [first] case, clay, stick, wheel, string, water, efforts of a potter, and so forth, are the causes of a pot, while a pot is their effect. A lid of a pot and such like, or blue dye and such like are parts, while a pot is the possessor of parts. The defining properties are a wide bottom, a lip, a long neck and so on, while a pot is what is being defined. The properties are black color and so on, while a pot is a possessor of properties. So, when this has been established, it is correct [to say] that the relation [between a self and the aggregates] is like [the relation between] fire and fuel. The explanation of these things, such as pots and a self and their acquisitions, is to be understood from the discussion in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*.
>
> In this way a proof of mutual dependence has been established for things other than a self and its acquisitions,[106] and for a self and its acquisitions, just like action and the agent of action. Because of [their] arrogance, some who think they understand correctly what the Tathāgata's words mean, have foolishly concluded that the categories of things taught by the Tīrthikas[107] agrees with the intent of the Buddhist teachings.

When Candrakīrti says that the acquirer of the aggregates brings them into existence and conceives them, he means that what acquires the aggregates brings them into existence by conceiving them. Here "existence" is used to refer to existence in dependence upon something else. Candrakīrti is explaining what is true by convention about a self and its aggregates. When it is said that "every relation that establishes [the mutually dependent existence of] a self and [its] acquisitions is explained and is fully understood by reference to fire and fuel," he is referring to the five relations upon which he relied in his argument for the thesis that neither fire nor fuel exists by itself. When Candrakīrti refers to "a proof that a self and its acquisitions are mutually dependent," the proof to which he refers relies on the conventions that to be a self is to be an agent that acquires the aggregates as its parts and to be the aggregates is to be what the self acquires.

The list of mutually dependent things Candrakīrti presents is particularly interesting, since it picks out some of the most important types of co-dependence that have played important roles in Western philosophy. The mutual dependency of cause and effect enables us to explain how things like pots come to be; the mutual dependency of parts and whole or possessor of parts enables us to analyze pots into their parts; the mutual dependence of defining properties and what is defined enables us to classify pots according to their defining properties; and the mutual dependency of properties and possessor of properties enables us to describe how pots can change and yet remain the same. Add to this the mutual

dependence of agent and object of action, which enables us to explain not only how fire and fuel are related, but also how self and the aggregates are related. Elsewhere he calls attention to the mutual dependency of agent, action, and object of action, which enables us to explain how perceiver, perceiving, and thing perceived function and how the one who desires, the desiring, and the desired thing function. Of special relevance to Western thought are his views that mind and its object and mind and body are mutually dependent. The list can be extended by examining the arguments of the different chapters of the *Treatise*.

The Sūtra passage in the commentary on 163

In support of his claim that a self does not exist as a thing, Candrakīrti quotes verses from a Mahāyāna sūtra. To say that a self does not exist as a thing is to say that it is not substantially real in the sense of existing by itself. According to the verses the Buddha taught that sentient beings, space, bodhicitta, and his Qualities are inexhaustible or endless because they are not substantially real.[108] The verses are used to show that a self is not substantially real because sentient beings, space, bodhicitta, and the Qualities of the Buddhas are said to be inexhaustible because they are not substantially real. If they were substantially real they would not be inexhaustible because they would not exist.

Although sentient beings, space, bodhicitta, and Buddhas' Qualities are inexhaustible or endless, they are not so in the same way. Sentient beings, presumably, are endless in number, but space is endless in the sense that it has no boundaries. Bodhicitta would seem to be inexhaustible in its power to generate the Qualities of the Buddhas, which are themselves inexhaustible in some other way. This ambiguity does not give rise to a problem for Candrakīrti's citation of the verses, since he uses them to point out that in scripture the four things are said be inexhaustible would not have been said to be inexhaustible in the different ways in which they are endless if they were substantially real.

. . .

Verse 164

The self all wandering beings always
conceive as a self and in relation to which
they conceive things possessed by a self
is an unanalyzed convention arising from confusion.

A self that wanders in saṃsāra is an unanalyzed convention that arises from confusion. Although "confusion" (*moha*, *gti mug*) is sometimes used to refer to one of the six root mental afflictions (*kleśa*-s, *nyon mongs*), it is used here to mean "ignorance" (*avidya*, *ma rig pa*). In 164 Candrakīrti refers to the conception of a

self as confusion. The view that he says arises "because of confusion" is the transient collection view. When Candrakīrti says in 164d that a self arises from confusion, he means that the conceptual mind creates a self that appears to exist by itself. In C164 Candrakīrti paraphrases 164d by saying that a self is given a name because of the ignorance that is conceiving a self.

Candrakīrti restates a number of points he made earlier in the Commentary. He restates them to remind the reader of the ultimate reality of the self that is the object of the transient collection view. He says that although the Tīrthikas and some Buddhists think that a self exists independently, it does not, and only those Buddhists who realize that it does not exist independently can use their knowledge of a self to become free from the sufferings of saṃsāra. A self does not exist independently because it cannot be perceived in the causal basis of its conception.

Candrakīrti mentions just three types of lives into which a self can be reborn, the life of a human being, the life of an animal, and the life of a hungry spirit. These are three of the six kinds of lives into which a self can be reborn in the desire realm. The other three are the life of a hell being, the life of a demi-god, and the life of a god. A self can also be reborn into the form realm, in which desire is suppressed, or into the formless realm, in which both desire and bodily form are suppressed. Rebirths into the formless realm are brought about by the practice of yogic techniques that enable meditators to suppress desire and bodily form.

Candrakīrti also explains how the conception of the possessions of a self arises. The possessions of a self include things under its control, inner phenomena such as the organs of perception, and its external possessions. The organs of perception, therefore, are included in the causal basis of the conception of a self. The organs of perception are the sense-organs and the mental organ. The sense-organs are inner phenomena because they are thought to be forms of subtle matter that cannot be perceived by means of the sense organs themselves. The parts of the human body that can be perceived by means of the five senses are not included in the causal basis of the conception of a self, though they are the causal bases of the conception of something other than a self.

A self, Candrakīrti says, is known not to exist by itself because meditators do not perceive it in the causal basis of its conception. However, he is not saying this to explain what it means to be an unexamined convention arising from confusion. Were he to explain an unanalyzed convention arising from confusion he would explain how the conception of a self is responsible for a name being given to a self. He has, of course, explained this elsewhere, and he sees no point in repeating that explanation here.

Candrakīrti says that when a meditator fails to see a self, he also fails to see its possessions, but he does not explain why. The explanation is that the possessions of a self are conceived in dependence upon a self, and so if a self does not exist by itself, neither do its possessions. When Candrakīrti says that a meditator is freed from saṃsāra because he does not perceive an intrinsic nature in anything, he does not mean that a meditator becomes free of saṃsāra the very first

time he has an experience of emptiness. He means that a meditator begins to become free of saṃsāra at that time. One who first experiences emptiness is a stream enterer and not until he reaches the stage of being a non-returner can it be said that he has become free of saṃsāra.

Finally, Candrakīrti quotes *Treatise* 18.4 to support his claim that when a meditator does not perceive a false intrinsic nature in anything he is freed from saṃsāra. In the verse quoted it is claimed that when a meditator abandons conceiving a self, he abandons conceiving things possessed by a self, and as a result, since the transient collection view is abandoned, he need not take birth again. Although I have already translated his commentary of *Treatise* 18.4 I repeat my translation here along with a translation of his commentary on *Treatise* 18.3, which includes many quotations pertinent to his theory of persons. Since readers will have now learned the meanings of the terms he uses in these commentaries, my commentary on the quotation is restricted to notes. First his commentary on *Treatise* 18.3:

Clear Words 18.3–4

"Surely this is not so. A meditator who can be without conceiving a self and conceiving things possessed by a self must exist to some extent. And since he exists, a self and the aggregates are shown [to exist]." No, this is not so, since

One who does not conceive a self or things possessed by a self
does not exist. One who sees [he who] does not conceive a self
or things possessed by a self
does not see [the way things are].

When a self and the aggregates are not found to have a svabhāva, how will there be a thing, different from them, that is without conceiving a self and conceiving things possessed by a self? Therefore, he who sees a self that is without conceiving a self and conceiving things possessed by a self, that [one] does not possess a svabhāva by virtue of which it exists, [and so] does not see the way things are.[109] This is known.[110] As the Bhagavān said:

See the internal as empty.
See the external as empty.[111]
No one at all exists,
not even the one who realizes emptiness.

Similarly,

Whosoever thinks that phenomena are empty things
is a foolish child who enters into a bad path.

Empty phenomena are indestructible,
yet are taught to be [both] destructible and indestructible.[112]
One thinks that phenomena are quieted, completely silent,[113]
but his thinking never existed. Realize that
the conceptualizing activity of the mind[114] *is created by mind.*
Those phenomena in that cannot be perceived!

Moreover:

The aggregates are empty, without a svabhāva.
Nirvāṇa is empty, without a svabhāva.
He who performs action is empty of a svabhāva.
This is [so] for the wise, but not for the childish.

Now Candrakīrti begins his commentary on *Treatise* 18.4, which begins with a statement of the verse:

When a self and things possessed by a self are destroyed,
both internally and externally,
what is acquired passes away.
When that passes away, birth passes away.

In a sūtra it was said,

All of these [mental afflictions and the faults of saṃsāra] have their root in, are caused by, and come to be completely from, the transient collection view.[115]

And when a self and things possessed by a self are not found, this [transient] collection [view] is abandoned. And when that is abandoned, then the four things acquired, which are ignorant desires for bodily pleasure, wrong views, wrong adherence to vows and conceptions concerning a self, are abandoned. And from the abandonment of the things acquired there is the cessation of birth characterized by recurrent births.

…

Verse 165

An object of action does not exist unless an agent of action exists.
So things possessed by a self do not exist unless a self does.
Therefore, when the emptiness of self and of things as things
that belong to a self is seen by meditators, they attain freedom.

Candrakīrti now completes his account of the selflessness of persons. He says that since the possessions of a self do not exist unless a self exists, meditators realize that the possessions of a self do not exist by themselves when they realize that a self does not exist by itself. So when meditators abandon the mistaken view of a self they also abandon the transient collection view.

In 165 Candrakīrti says that the emptiness of self and things possessed by a self is seen by meditators. He does not mean that they are seen by meditators who are looking for them in the causal basis of their conceptions. Seeing the emptiness of an object is experiencing the absence of the object in the causal basis of its conception. Candrakīrti thinks that just as a pot does not exist without a potter, the possessions of a self cannot exist without a self. He had earlier used the example of a pot and a potter to illustrate the relation between the object of a transitive active verb and that the subject of the verb as agent that performs an action. The verb in this case signifies potting in the sense of the making of a pot. The example of a pot and a potter is not being used here in this way, but as an example of what cannot exist apart from something else. So the meaning is that just as a pot cannot exist apart from a potter, so things possessed by a self cannot exist apart from a self.

The Mahāyānists teach that when I begin directly to perceive my selflessness, neither I nor my aggregates appear before my mind. What appears is a space-like voidness called emptiness. This is an experience of my ultimate reality. I am told to cultivate the knowledge that my ultimate reality is emptiness. As this knowledge takes hold in my mind, I gradually stop clinging to a self and its possessions. Having developed the knowledge that I do not exist independently, I know that my possessions do not exist independently. At some point, I should be able completely to stop clinging to the false appearance of my independent existence. Consequently, I become free from rebirth in saṃsāra unless I decide out of compassion to remain in saṃsāra to help other beings to become free.

Candrakīrti says that Śravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas realize the selflessness of persons. The Śravakas and Pratyekabuddhas differ from the Bodhisattvas, who are said to prolong their existence in saṃsāra to work for the liberation of all sentient beings. Śravakas seek their own liberation and achieve it in a lifetime in which they receive and follow the Buddha's teachings. Pratyekabuddhas seek their own liberation, but achieve it in a lifetime in which they follow, but do not receive, the Buddha's teachings. Although they do not receive the Buddha's teachings during the lifetime in which they achieve their own liberation, they have heard and practiced these teachings in prior lives, and so they instinctively know how to practice in order to achieve nirvāṇa.

Candrakīrti ends his discussion of the selflessness of persons by urging the wise, who have renounced saṃsāra, to seek the realization of the selflessness of persons in the way he has explained it is to be done.

APPENDIX

Vasubandhu's "Refutation" and the central philosophical questions about which Indian Buddhist theories of persons are concerned

Vasubandhu's "Refutation" is a Buddhist treatise on "the selflessness of persons" (*pudgalanairātmya*). Vasubandhu is generally regarded as one of the most important philosophers of the scholastic period of Buddhist thought in India. His treatise deals with philosophical questions about persons that are different from but closely related to a number of important philosophical questions about persons discussed in the West. For this reason it should be of considerable interest not only to Buddhists and scholars of Buddhism, but also to those who are familiar with the relevant discussions in Western philosophy. Although not all of the philosophical questions discussed by the Indian Buddhists are explicitly raised in the "Refutation," I believe that a careful study of this treatise is the best way to gain initial access to them. To facilitate this access here I will sketch these questions and how they are related to the study of Vasubandhu's treatise.

A theory of persons in India is a theory in which the ontological status of persons is explained, arguments for the theory are presented, objections to rival theories are put forward, replies to objections to the theory are made, and the consequences for us entailed by the theory are elaborated. A "person" or "self" in the Indian philosophical tradition is that to which we refer when we use the first-person singular pronoun to refer and to which by convention we ascribe person-properties. Person-properties are properties that belong to persons because of their possession of bodies and minds, properties such as being a perceiver of objects, being a thinker of thoughts about the objects perceived, being an agent of actions that experiences the results of its actions, and so on.

In the "Refutation" Vasubandhu presents his interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons, objects to the interpretation of the Pudgalavādins, a Buddhist school of thought, and answers the objections to his interpretation presented by the Pudgalavādins and by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, a non-Buddhist school of thought in India. According to Vasubandhu's interpretation of the Buddha's theory, the first-person singular pronoun is used, in dependence upon the elements of the body and mind of a person Buddhists call the aggregates, to conceive its object as a possessor of person-properties. When it is so used, a false appearance of the object is created as a possessor of person-properties that exists by itself. This appearance is not false, he thinks, because the object is a substance

that exists apart from the aggregates, as the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas claim, but because analysis shows that the pronoun refers to the collection of aggregates in dependence upon which a possessor of person-properties is conceived rather than as a possessor of person-properties. Vasubandhu also believes that because we accept as true the false appearance of the object as a possessor of person-properties that exists by itself, we cause ourselves to suffer. Vasubandhu's interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons I call Vasubandhu's theory, since he believes that it is the correct theory.

The Pudgalavādins agree that the Buddha taught that the object of the first-person singular pronoun does not exist by itself as a possessor of person-properties. They also agree that our acceptance of this false appearance as true is the root cause of our suffering. But they believe that the appearance is false because the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself without any properties at all. They believe that the object exists by itself and yet is neither the same as the aggregates, as Vasubandhu claims, nor other than the aggregates, as the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas claim. I call their interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons their own theory of persons because they believe that it is the correct theory.

Vasubandhu's chief non-Buddhist opponents are the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas. They agree with him that (i) when the object of the first-person singular pronoun is used to conceive its object as a possessor of person-properties, a false appearance of this object is created as a possessor of person-properties that exists by itself and that (ii) our acceptance of this false appearance is the root cause of our suffering. But they believe that this appearance is false because the object of the first-person singular pronoun is in fact a permanent and partless substance that exists apart from the aggregates. The disagreement between Vasubandhu, the Pudgalavādins, and the Nyaya-Vaiśeṣikas about what the object of the first-person singular pronoun is that exists by itself is the basic issue discussed in the "Refutation."

There are Indian Buddhist philosophers who believe that the object of the first-person singular pronoun does not exist by itself, since it is neither the same as the aggregates nor other than the aggregates. The object does not exist by itself either as a possessor of person-properties, as a collection of aggregates, as a substance that exists apart from the aggregates, or as an entity without properties. The most articulate of these Buddhists, Candrakīrti, thinks that the Buddha taught that when we use the first-person singular pronoun to conceive a possessor of person-properties, we create, even apart from conceiving it to possess person-properties, a false appearance of this object existing by itself. Candrakīrti believes that the root cause of our suffering is that we accept as true the false appearance of the object of the first-person singular pronoun existing by itself. So another issue discussed by the Indian Buddhist philosophers is whether or not the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself. This issue is alluded to only once in the "Refutation," but it is important to a proper assessment of the central issue it does concern, which is as what the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself.

Because Candrakīrti believes that nothing we conceive exists by itself, he thinks that a reference to the object of the first-person singular pronoun does not depend upon the existence of this object by itself. This does not mean that he thinks that the first-person singular pronoun is not a referring expression. Rather, it means that he thinks that it refers to a mentally constructed object of the first-person singular pronoun. Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins believe that reference to the object of a first-person singular pronoun is possible only if this object exists by itself. So another issue that arises from a consideration of Indian Buddhist theories of persons is whether or not a reference to the object of the first-person singular pronoun is possible if the object does not exist by itself.

These disagreements about whether or not the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself, and if it does, under what description it exists by itself, and if it does not, whether reference to it is possible, cannot be settled without an answer to the more general question of what it means to say that something exists. Although most Indian Buddhist philosophers agree that what enters into a causal relationship with other things in some sense exists, they do not agree about the sense in which it exists. Different accounts of what it means to say that something exists and different accounts of what it is that exists also distinguish Indian Buddhist theories of persons from one another.

There is a set of issues that arise in dependence upon the arguments used by those who propound the different theories of persons presented in the "Refutation." The most basic issue concerns the use of conventional discourse and thought to reject a theory of persons. Vasubandhu's opponents seem to believe that his theory, that the object of the first-person singular pronoun is the aggregates, should be rejected because it undermines conventional ascriptions of properties to this object. Such properties include being the same at different times (and in different lives), being one person rather than many, remembering objects experienced in the past, having perceptions, feelings and other mental states, being an agent of actions who experiences the results of his actions, and such like. At issue here is whether or not that which is identified with the object of the first-person singular pronoun undermines conventional ascriptions of properties to this object. Vasubandhu argues that the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas' theory, that the object is a separate substance, undermines our conventional ascriptions of person-properties to this object. He argues that the Pudgalavādins' theory, that self is neither the same as nor other than the aggregates, is subject to the same objections to which the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas' theory, since if the object exists by itself and is not the same as the aggregates it must be other than the aggregates. Moreover, Vasubandhu and the Pudgalavādins believe that the theory of persons held by the other is refuted by the teachings of the Buddha.

An issue raised by Candrakīrti concerns whether or not, if the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself, our conventional ascriptions of person-properties to it can be explained. He believes, following the lead of Nāgārjuna, the founder of the Madhyamaka school of Buddhist philosophy, that if the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself, it cannot enter

into a causal relationship with other phenomena and so cannot come to be, cease to be, change, or perform any of the functions that it is believed to perform as a self. This issue, although not discussed in the "Refutation," is relevant to an assessment of the debate between Vasubandhu and his opponents concerning what the self is that exists by itself.

Finally, Indian philosophers have different views concerning knowledge of the existence of the object of the first-person singular pronoun. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas think that it is known to exist as a separate substance by means of inference. In the "Refutation" Vasubandhu attempts to show that many of these inferences are incorrect. Vasubandhu believes that we know this object exists when we know that the aggregates exist by themselves. The Pudgalavādins think that we know that this object exists by itself by means of perception. In the "Refutation" Vasubandhu challenges both of these accounts of how the self is known to exist by itself. Candrakīrti thinks that it is known to exist as part of the conceptual scheme of which it is a part.

This is a very brief statement of the central philosophical questions to which a study of the "Refutation" gives rise. In the introduction to the translation and in its Commentary I will explain how they arise when the treatise is carefully read and its theses and arguments are carefully assessed.

The basic theories of persons in India are the independent existence theory and the dependent existence theory. There are three versions of the independent existence theory. The first is that the object of the first-person singular pronoun exists by itself and is other than the aggregates (held by the Tīrthikas). The second is that it exists by itself and is the same as the aggregates (held by Vasubandhu). The third is that it exists by itself and is neither other than nor the same as the aggregates (held by the Pudgalavādins). The dependent existence theory is that it exists in dependence upon the aggregates (held by Candrakīrti).

NOTES

1 INTRODUCTION

1 The time of the birth and death of Śakhyamuni Buddha are uncertain: most early-twentieth-century historians date his lifetime from 563 BCE to 483 BCE. More recently, however, at a specialist symposium on this question, the majority of those scholars who presented definite opinions gave dates within twenty years either side of 400 BCE for the Buddha's death, with others supporting earlier or later dates. See L.S. Cousins, "The Dating of the Historical Buddha," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, 6.1 (1996), 57–63.
2 This teaching is in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*. Traditionally it is said to be the Buddha's first discourse after he reached full awakening. In Pāli literature this sutta is contained in the *Samyutta Nikaya*, chapter 56 ("*Saccasamyutta*" or "Connected Discourses on the Truths"), sutta number 11. For more information see Richard Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (London: Routledge, 1988).
3 Although I use "theory of persons" to refer to the collection of theses about persons presented in the different Indian Buddhist philosophical schools, there is no comparable expression used in these schools. Nonetheless, what is said in these schools about persons constitutes theories of persons.
4 The Buddha's teaching on the four realities is thought in the Indian Buddhist philosophical schools to rest not only on a theory of persons, but also upon a theory of mind and matter. In this study I refer to the theories of mind and matter presented in the schools only as needed to explain their theories of persons. Different Indian Buddhist philosophical schools interpret these three theories differently.
5 Unless indicated otherwise, when a Sanskrit term is cited, it is put in parentheses, and if a second term is cited, it is the customary Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term. I will follow the convention of representing the plural number of Sanskrit terms by appending "s" to them, with a connecting hyphen. In notes to the translation, and when I am discussing a Tibetan text, the term first cited is always a Tibetan term, and if a second term is cited, it is the Sanskrit term of which it is the usual translation.
6 In this study I refer to the object of the first-person singular pronoun as a self rather than as a person, since this is Candrakīrti's own preferred usage. However, the properties of a self as a self I call "person-properties."
7 "The object to which we refer when we use the first-person singular pronoun to refer" is abbreviated in what follows to "the object of the first-person singular pronoun." Moreover, what it means for us to refer to this object, Candrakīrti believes, is to refer to a mentally constructed object of the first-person singular pronoun, regardless whether or not it possesses person-properties. Those whose

theories of persons he opposes employ a form of analysis that shows that there is an object to which we refer when we use this pronoun, but it is not a possessor of person-properties.

8 Indian Buddhist philosophers often refer to a self as "I," but they do not make it clear whether it is conceived as a person-property self or as a self without person-properties.

9 Since "person-properties" is not a term employed by the Indian Buddhist philosophers, I should explain how I use it. A contemporary philosophical account is not relevant here for purposes of this study, since it would be irrelevant to the sort of reconstruction of Candrakīrti's theory of persons being attempted here. For Candrakīrti, person-properties are properties ascribed to the objects of the first-person singular pronoun on the basis of the Buddha's doctrine that these objects possess minds and cause themselves to wander in cyclic existence in dependence upon actions they perform in accord with the laws of actions and their results. Candrakīrti himself would most likely say that person-properties are properties ascribed to the objects of the first-person singular pronoun in dependence upon actions they perform in accord with the law of actions and their results. The list of person-properties I give above are person-properties for Candrakīrti.

10 In some non-Buddhist philosophical schools the object of the first-person singular pronoun was identified with what in the West is called a soul.

11 Little with historical accuracy can be said about Candrakīrti's life, whose Buddhist biographers, Buston and Tārānātha, present idealized portraits of his life. Both say that he was born in south India. For more information, see David Ruegg's *The Literature of the Madhyamika School of Philosophy in India* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981).

12 There are two Tibetan translations of the *Madhyamakāvatāra*. One is called the *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*. It was composed by Tshul khrims rgyal ba with help of Kṛṣṇapandita and Tilakakalaśa, and revised by pa tshab nyi ma grags. It is preserved in the Peking Canon as 5261, Vol. 98 (226b7–45a2). The other is called *dBu ma la 'jug pa shes bya ba*. It was composed by pa tshab nyi ma grags with the help of Tilakakalaśa and later revised by pa tshab nyi ma grags. It is preserved in the Peking Canon as 5262, Vol. 98 (245a2–264b8).

13 There is a Tibetan translation of the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*. The translation is entitled *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa shes bya ba*. It was composed by Tilakakalaśa and pa tshab nyi ma grags and revised by Kanakavarman with the help of pa tshab nyi ma grags. It is preserved in the Peking Canon as 5263, Vol. 98 (264b8–411b1).

14 There are four modern editions of Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakaśāstra*, which is also known in Sanskrit as *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (*Verses on the Fundamentals of the Middle Way*) and *Madhyamakakārikā* (*Verses on the Middle Way*). Two include Candrakīrti's commentary, entitled *Clear Words* (*Prasannapadā*). The first is the edition of Louis de La Vallée Poussin, entitled *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā commentaire de Candrakīrti* (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1970, and the second is that of P.L. Vaidya, entitled *Madhyamakaśāstra of Nāgārjuna with the Commentary: Prasannapadā by Candrakīrti* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960). A third is by J.W. de Jong, entitled *Nāgārjuna, Mūlamadhymakakārikāḥ* (Adyar: Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1977). Also see C. Lindtner, in *Nāgārjuna's Filosofiske Vaerker*, Indiske Studier 2 (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982), pp. 177–215. English translations of the *Madhyamakaśāstra* are listed in the bibliography.

15 A recently released manuscript of the *Introduction* and its *Commentary* is being edited by a group of scholars including Horst Lasic, Helmut Krasser, and Toru Tomabechi (Institut für Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften), Xuezhu Li (China Tibetology Research Center (CTRC) in

Beijing), and Anne MacDonald (University of Vienna). The manuscript is kept in the collection of the CTRC. Access to the manuscript is limited to the members of the editorial group. The end of the project cannot be predicted. However, there are plans to publish portions of the text whenever a bigger unit, one or two chapters, is finished. The manuscript consists of 97 folios (one folio is missing) and is written in proto-Bengali. The quality of the manuscript is mediocre; a few passages are blurred and cannot be read. (Information supplied by Helmut Krasser.)

16 See notes 12 and 13.

17 This is the edition of Louis de La Vallée Poussin, which is entitled *Madhyamakāvatāra par Candrakīrti*, Bibliotheca Buddhica IX (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1970).

18 *Indian Buddhist Theories of Persons: Vasubandhu's "Refutation of the Theory of a Self"* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). Vasubandhu's treatise is translated in pp. 71–111. Hereafter, *Indian Buddhist Theories of Persons* will be cited as *IBTP*.

19 There is disagreement about the dates of Vasubandhu's life because it is not clear whether or not the Vasubandhu who composed the *Treasury of Knowledge* is the same Vasubandhu who composed a number of works from the point of view of the Cittamātrika School some time during the fourth century CE. I take no position on this controversy, the final resolution of which seems not to be possible on the basis of the evidence now available. That there are two Vasubandhus was argued by Erich Frauwallner in *On the Date of the Buddhist Master of the Law, Vasubandhu* (Rome: IsMeo, 1951); an argument against the view is included in Stefan Anacker's *Seven Works of Vasubandhu*, corrected edn. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998). For further references, consult Peter Skilling, "Vasubandhu and the Vyākhyāyukti Literature," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 23 (2000), 297–350, in which a detailed bibliography on this topic can be found in the second note.

20 It has become customary within Tibetan Buddhism to explain the philosophy of the Indian Buddhist philosophical schools in terms of the "theses" or "tenets" (*siddhānta*-s, *grub mtha'*) they present and defend. Here I follow this custom.

21 There is a considerable amount of information now available in English about the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣikas and the original Sautrāntikas. Most of this information is based on the account provided by Vasubandhu in his *Treasury of Knowledge*. According to Tibetan scholars there was also a revised Sautrāntika School, whose theses are Sautrāntika theses reformulated in conformity with the logic and epistemology of Dharmakīrti (sixth century CE). See *Cutting through Appearances: The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1989), in which Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins translate and explain the account of the Tibetan scholar, Gön chok jig may wang po, who presents (i) the theses of the Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣika philosophy, as explained in Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge*, (ii) the theses of the revised Sautrāntika philosophy, (iii) the theses of the original Cittamātra philosophy, and (iv) the theses of three different branches of the Madhyamaka School. The theses of the revised Cittamātra philosophy are not presented by Gön chok jig may wang po. They are for the most part the theses of the original Cittamātra philosophy reformulated in conformity with the logic and epistemology of Dharmakīrti.

22 The Kaśmīrī Vaibhāṣikas identify a self with a collection of phenomena in a causal continuum, and the variation concerns its identification of a self with a subtle form of consciousness, which is one of these phenomena.

23 Some of the Pudgalavādin schools existed for over 1,000 years in India. The first of the schools to have appeared was called the Vātsīputrīya School. It is named after its founder, Vātsīputra. The dates of Vātsīputra's life are difficult to determine. It is not clear whether he was a contemporary of the Buddha or flourished about 200 years

after the death of the Buddha. A discussion of problems about the sources of our information about the original founder of the Pudgalavāda philosophy can be found in Leonard Priestley's *Pudgalavāda Buddhism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Centre for South Asian Studies, 1999), pp. 32–6. Our best evidence of how the Pudgalavādins interpreted the Buddha's theory of persons is (i) set out in the *Sāṃmitīyanikāya Śāstra* and the *Tridharmaka Śāstra*, both of which have survived in Chinese translations, and (ii) in the śāstras composed by their Buddhist critics. See *IBTP*, pp. 8–14 for my account of the theory of persons of the Pudgalavādins.

24 Vasubandhu also considers the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas' objections to his interpretation of the Buddha's theory of persons.

25 The Sanskrit texts of Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṃgraha* and Kamalaśīla's *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* are presented by E. Kṛṣṇamācārya in two volumes in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series in 1926, and then edited by Dwārikādāśāstrī as part of the Bauddha Bhāratī series, Vārānasī, in 1968.

26 The *Tattvasaṃgraha* of Śāntarakṣita and its commentary by Kamalaśīla have been translated by G. Vyas in *The Tattvasaṃgraha of Śāntarakṣita with the Commentary of Kamalaśīla* (Delhi: Matilal Banarsidass, 1986).

27 When I was writing the first book the secondary literature on the theory of persons presented by the Pudgalavādins did not seem to me to have accurately explained their theory. The secondary literature to which I refer here is discussed in the notes to the introduction of *IBTP*, especially notes 20, 31, 44–8, 66, 88, and 100. I presented a new reconstruction of their theory on the basis of an analysis of (i) what they themselves say in the extant Chinese translations of two of their treatises, and (ii) what their theory is reported to be in the accounts of their Buddhist critics. See *IBTP*, pp. 8–14, 17–28, 33–42, 133–53, and 166–9. I developed what I still believe to be a more accurate reconstruction and assessment of the Pudgalavādins' theory than had previously been presented in the scholarly literature.

28 See *IBTP*, pp. 16–24.

29 See *IBTP*, pp. 24–31, 36–44.

30 In the earlier book I claimed that Vasubandhu believes that a self does not exist by itself, but I did not say that this self is a person-property self. I also claimed that he believes that a self exists by itself, and I did not say that this self is a self without person-properties. I ask my readers who consult the earlier book to excuse this oversight and to take account of the ambiguous character of these claims.

31 Engle's 1980 doctoral dissertation (cited below), which has not been published, includes an account of what Candrakīrti says in the Commentary. His account, although not inaccurate, does not employ a terminology that I believe makes it perfectly clear what Candrakīrti's theses are, how he argues for them, and how his theory is related to the other two basically different interpretations of the Buddha's theory. Nāgārjuna's theory of persons has been discussed from a contemporary perspective by Jan Westerhoff in *Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), chapter 7.

32 These works are listed in the bibliography and mentioned in my discussion of the Tibetan commentators.

33 An excellent account of Tsongkhapa's reconstruction of Nāgārjuna's philosophy and how it differs from its modern interpreters is in Elizabeth Napper's *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1989), pp. 67–142.

34 My general impression of the disputes between Tsongkhapa's critics and his followers is that both seem to exaggerate the differences between their interpretations of Candrakīrti's philosophy, and that their differences may be more terminological than substantive. But this is an impression, and needs to be shown in some detail.

35 For instance, I have avoided terminology such as "reductionist theory," "non-reductionist theory," "person-stages," and "essence."

36 The Madhyamaka account of the Buddha's teaching on the wisdom needed to follow the Mahāyāna path to Buddhahood will be explained below, along with what the Mahāyāna path to Buddhahood is.
37 A self that acquires the aggregates does not under that description possess person-properties, since it possesses person-properties by means of acquiring them. Many scholars prefer to say that a self "appropriates" the aggregates rather than that a self that "acquires" them.
38 I will explain below the different ways in which a person-property self and a self without person-properties are conceived in dependence upon the aggregates.
39 Engle's unpublished dissertation is entitled "The Buddhist Theory of Self According to Acārya Candrakīrti" (University of Wisconsin, Madison). It includes a translation of the verses and commentary on verses 166–78.
40 Churinoff's translation is called *Auto-Commentary of the Supplement to the Middle Way*.
41 Geshe Rabten, *Echoes of Voidness*, trans. and ed. by Stephen Batchelor (London: Wisdom Publications, 1983).
42 *The Emptiness of Emptiness* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).
43 See the reviews of *The Emptiness of Emptiness* by José Cabezon in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 13.2 (1990), 152–61, and by Paul Williams in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 19 (1991), 191–218. For an exchange between C.W. Huntington, Jr. and José Cabezon, see Huntington, Jr.'s "The Theatre of Objectivity: Comments on José Cabezon's Interpretations of mKhas grub rje's and C.W. Huntington, Jr.'s Interpretations of the Tibetan Translation of a Seventh Century Indian Buddhist Text" and Cabezon's "On Retreating to Method and Other Postmodern Turns: A Response to C.W. Huntington," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 15.1 (1992), 118–43.
44 *The Ontology of the Middle Way* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990).
45 This is Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's *Ocean of Nectar: Wisdom and Compassion in Mahayana Buddhism* (London: Tharpa Publications, 1995). Hereafter, reference to this book will be to "Geshe Gyatso's commentary."
46 *Rendawa Shönnu Lodrö's Commentary on the "Entry into the Middle" Lamp Which Elucidates Reality* (Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1997). I will refer to this book as "Rendawa's commentary." The Tibetan translation against which this translation was checked is *dPal ldan sa skya pa'i gsung rab*, which has been published in vol. 13 of a series of Tibetan texts, by Mi rigs dpe skrun khang and mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang (ISBN: 7-105-05541-3).
47 *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary by Jamgöm Mipham* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2002). The Tibetan text against which this translation was checked is that published by Sonam Tokay Kazi in vol. 60 of the Ngagyur Nyingmay Sangrab series, pp. 551–84. Hereafter, reference to this book will be to "Mipham's commentary."
48 *The Moon of Wisdom: Chapter Six of Chandrakirti's Entering the Middle Way with Commentary from the Eighth Karmapa* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2005). Hereafter, reference to this book will be to "Mikyö Dorje's commentary."
49 *The Karmapa's Middle Way: Feast for the Fortunate* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2008). Hereafter, reference to this book will be to "Wangchuk Dorje's commentary."
50 At the beginning of the twentieth century a French translation of the *Introduction*, up to Book VI, Verse 165, was composed by Louis de La Vallée Poussin in a series of articles (see *Muséon* 8 (1907), 249–317; 11 (1910), 271–358; 12 (1911), 235–328), and in 1981 a German translation of the remainder of Book VI was composed by Helmut Taucher (see *Candrakīrti-Madhyamakāvatāraḥ und Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣyam* (Vienna: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, 1981)).

51 See note 12 for bibliographical information. The Tibetan translation is included in the Peking Edition as 5260, Vol. 98. Seventeen of the chapters of *Clear Words* have been translated into English by M. Sprung, in a book entitled the *Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way: The Essential Chapters from the Prasannapadā of Candrakīrti* (Boulder, CO: Prajñā Press, 1979). See also J. May, *Candrakīrti Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛtti* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1959) and J.W. de Jong, *Cinq Chaiptres de la Prasannapadā* (Paris: Paul Guethner, 1949).

52 Buddhists refer to those who follow the non-Buddhist Indian philosophical schools as Forders because they attempt to ford the river of saṃsāra.

53 See note 46.

54 The commentary of Gorampa (*Go bo rab 'byams pa bsod nams seng ge*), whose title is *lta ba nyan sel*, is translated as *Removal of Wrong Views: A General Synopsis of the "Introduction to the Middle" and Analysis of the Difficult Point of Each of Its Subjects*, by Jürgen Stöter Tillmann and Professor Tashi Tsering (Kathmandu: International Buddhist Academy, 2005). Hereafter, reference to this book will be to "Gorampa's commentary."

55 This part of the Mikyö Dorje's commentary is translated by Ari Goldfield, Jules Levinson, Jim Scott, and Birgit Scott in the work cited in note 45. The Tibetan text against which I checked this translation is included in the book. The part of Mikyö Dorje's commentary that has not been translated into English concerns his disagreements with other Tibetan scholars (primarily Tsongkhapa) on the interpretation of the Madhyamaka philosophy as a whole.

56 See note 48 for bibliographical information. I thank Mark Seibold for his translations of Mikyö Dorje's discussions of the views of Tsongkhapa and for comments on my attempts to understand their discussion.

57 See note 45 for bibliographical information.

58 Tsongkhapa's commentary is usually called *The Illumination of the Thought* (*dGongs pa rab gsal*). There is in private circulation an unpublished translation of chapter 6 of Tsongkhapa's commentary by Joan Nicell, which has been checked and corrected by Thupten Sherab Shepa. This translation has been made available to me by the kindness of Joan Nicell. Sections of the translation to which I refer in this study were checked against the edition of the Tibetan text published by the Gelugpa Students' Welfare Committee, at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in 1998.

59 For the sake of readers who would like to study Candrakīrti's theory of persons and who for various reasons are unable to consult the Tibetan or Sanskrit texts, references are made in this introduction and in the commentary to their English translations if they exist.

60 A commentary on the *Introduction* I had considered consulting is that of Jayānanda (second half of the eleventh century CE), who translated many of Candrakīrti's works into Tibetan. However, in *The Illumination of the Thought*, Tsongkhapa regularly criticizes the views of Jayānanda with which he disagrees, but does not criticize any of Jayānanda's views on the Verses. I concluded that Jayānanda most likely had said nothing with which Tsongkhapa disagreed, and for this reason I decided not to include a study of Jayānanda's commentary.

61 The full title is *Drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po*. It is preserved in the Peking Canon as 6142, Vol. 153. There is a typeset edition (Mundgod: Drepung Loseling Library, 1991).

62 This is the title used for the Indian edition, which was published by Motilal Banarsidass. The title of this work in its American edition is *The Central Philosophy of Tibet: A Study and Translation of Jey Tsongkhapa's Essence of True Eloquence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984). See also J. Hopkins' translation of the first five chapters in his *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 65–245.

63 The three volumes were translated by the Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee and published in 2000, 2002, and 2004 by Snow Lion Publications. Reference to this book will be to "*Great Treatise*." The Tibetan text, *byang chub lam rim chen mo*. It is preserved in the Peking Canon as 6001, Vol. 152. There is a typeset edition published in Xining by Qingai Minorities Press (1988).

64 The full title of Tsongkhapa's commentary is *Ocean of Reasoning: An Explanation of the Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way Called "Wisdom"* (*dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*). There is a typeset edition published in Sarnath by the Gelukpa Students Union (1973).

65 Their translation is entitled the *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

66 The full title is *A Dose of Emptiness: An Annotated Translation of the sTong thun chen mo of mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

67 The full title is *Maps of the Profound: Jam-yang-shay-ba's Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views on the Nature of Reality* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2003).

68 See Thupten Jinpa's *Self, Reality and Reason in Tibetan Philosophy, Tsongkhapa's Quest for the Middle Way* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002). Jinpa's account of Tsongkhapa's theory shows that Tsongkhapa closely follows what Candrakīrti says in the Commentary, which implies that his characterizations of Tsongkhapa's theory in terms of Western theories of persons also applies to Candrakīrti's theory of persons. In his analysis, Geshe Jinpa adopts the distinction between reductionist and nonreductionist theories of persons that I used in my "Reductionist and Nonreductionist Theories of Persons in Indian Buddhist Philosophy," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 21 (1993), 79–101.

69 Those who wish to study Mikyö Dorje's interpretation of Candrakīrti's philosophy and his objections to Tsongkhapa's interpretation may consult the comprehensive account of Mikyö Dorje's philosophy provided by Karl Brunnhölzl in *The Center of the Sunlit Sky: Madhyamaka in the Kagyü Tradition* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2004).

70 Tsongkhapa identifies the Sāṃmitīyas as "the Āryasāṃmitīyas, the Vātsīputrīyas, and so forth," which is not helpful. Gorampa says that there are two subschools of the Sāṃmitīya School, "the Kaurukullaka and the Avantaka," in which it is asserted that a self is the aggregates, and a third, the "Vātsīputrīya," in which a self is asserted to be inexplicable. Mipham identifies the Sāṃmitīyas in question with "one branch of the Sājmitīya School." Mikyö Dorje and Mipham identify the Āryasāṃmitīyas with the Vātsīputrīyas. Mipham says that the Āryasāṃmitīya School is a subschool of the Sāṃmitīya School. In *Cutting through Appearances*, Gön chok jik may wang po refers to five Sāṃmitīya schools (pp. 177 and 196), of which one, according to Geshe Sopa, is the Vātsīputrīyas, who assert that a self is inexplicable (p. 177). However, according to Losang Gönchok, there are five Sāṃmitīya subschools, all of which teach that a self is inexplicable. See *Buddhist Philosophy: Losang Gönchok's Short Commentary to Jamyang Shayba's Root Text of Tenets*, trans. by Daniel Cozort and Craig Preston (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2003), p. 147. All the commentators take for granted the correctness of Candrakīrti's attribution of the sameness thesis to the Sāṃmitīyas.

71 For instance, Candrakīrti's attribution of the sameness thesis to the Sāṃmitīyas is inconsistent with Lobsang Gönchok's claim that there are five Sājmitīya subschools in all of which it is taught that a self is inexplicable. See Losang Gönchock's *Short Commentary to Jamyang Shayba's Root Text of Tenets*, to which I referred in the previous note.

72 The aggregates are also explained, from the Vaibhāṣika and original Sautrāntika points of view, by Vasubandhu in the *Treasury of Knowledge* and his commentary on it. For an introduction to his explanation, see *IBTP*, pp. 31–43.
73 That the Sāṃmitīyas would think that a collection of aggregates as a collection does not exist by itself and that the aggregates in the collection exist by themselves is made likely because Vasubandhu, who also asserts that a collection of aggregates is a self, thinks that a collection of aggregates is real by way of a conception, while the aggregates in the collection are substantially real. I argue this in *IBTP*, note 87 on pp. 68–9.
74 Geshe Gyatso seems to think that the Sāṃmitīyas actually asserted the thesis that each of the aggregates is a self. See Geshe Gyatso's commentary, pp. 299–301.
75 Here and elsewhere I formulate the theses that the aggregates are a self and that mind is a self as the thesis that the aggregates or minds are a self, since this simplifies a combined reference to these theses.
76 See Gorampa's commentary, pp. 302–3. Although Mipham, in his commentary (pp. 285–6), calls attention to Gorampa's claim, he does not explicitly endorse it. It is, however, endorsed in Wangchok Dorje's commentary, pp. 366–7, who does not believe that in these other schools it is thought that a self is found in its basis of conception. Note that when I cite a term used by a Tibetan scholar, the Tibetan term is cited first, followed by a Sanskrit original if one is known to exist.
77 See *Essence of True Eloquence*, translated in Thurman's *Speech of Gold*, esp. pp. 299–306. See also mKhas grub rje's *The Great Digest* (*stong thun chen mo*), in *A Dose of Emptiness*, pp. 187–8. The Gelugpa scholars with whom I have discussed this problem think that Tsongkhapa treats these other schools as if they assert forms of the sameness thesis rather than because they actually assert them. I think that both Candrakīrti and Tsongkhapa simply assume that Candrakīrti's Indian Buddhist opponents assert both that a self is real by way of a conception and that the aggregates are a self because they realize that the first self is a person-property self and the second is not.
78 See Geshe Gyatso's commentary, pp. 299–301.
79 Candrakīrti most likely does not think that his Buddhist opponents explicitly give such an explanation. He is assuming that they adopt these theses to explain what the Buddha said.
80 Geshe Sopa tells us this in *Cutting through Appearances*, p. 196.
81 The commentators' outlines of the argument of chapter 6 of the *Introduction* are uniformly excellent. Those who wish to study the outlines separately may do so by reading their commentaries. Fenner's *The Ontology of the Middle Way* contains Tsongkhapa's outline. There is no outline included in the translation of Rendawa's commentary.
82 This work survives only in Tibetan, under the title, *dGongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo*, P774, Vol. 29; Toh. 106, Dharma Vol. 18. The Tibetan text was edited and translated into French by Étienne Lamotte as *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra: l'explication des mysteres* (Louvain: Université de Louvain, 1935). The presentation of the three wheels of doctrine is contained in chapter 7, entitled "Questions of Paramārthasamudgata."
83 This paragraph and the following two are based on Gön chok jik may wang po's presentation, which is included in *Cutting through Appearances*.
84 See E. Conze's English language translation of the most important version of this work, which he calls *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines* (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973).
85 This work is translated by M. Honda in "An Annotated Translation of the '*Daśabhūmika*'," in D. Sinor (ed.), *Studies in Southeast and Central Asia*, Śatapiṭaka Series 74 (New Delhi, 1968), pp. 115–276.

86 The ten perfections are explained below.

87 Śravakas are those who, during their lives, practice, with the help of teachers, the Buddha's teachings on how to achieve their own freedom from suffering in saṃsāra. Pratyekabuddhas are those who, during their lives, practice, without the help of teachers, the Buddha's teachings on how to achieve their own freedom from suffering in saṃsāra, because in a previous lifetime they practiced his teachings with the help of teachers.

88 This reconstruction of Candrakīrti's view of the different interpretations of the conception of a self is somewhat different from that of the Tibetan commentators.

89 The possessions are conceived as existing by their own nature. Normally, I will refer to the concept of the possessions of a self. This is the same as what is often translated as "the conception of a mine" or as "grasping at a mine" (*mamakāra*, *bdag gir 'dzin pa*). For an explanation of my translation, see p. 37.

90 Contaminated action results in rebirth, which is a form of suffering.

91 The following characterizations of each of the five Mahāyāna paths is a compilation of teachings I have received from different the Tibetan Buddhist scholars with whom I have studied.

92 Śāntideva, another Mādhyamika scholar, teaches that practitioners become Bodhisattvas upon perfecting the practice of bodhicitta apart from joining it with special insight.

93 More than this is said to be abandoned. See *Cutting through Appearances*, pp. 314–5.

94 I omit here the complicated Mahāyāna accounts of the different "Bodies" (*kāya*-s) of a Buddha, one of which is an apparitional form of a sentient being. Nor do I discuss the arguments of the Indian Buddhists who deny that Śakhyamuni Buddha is an apparitional form of a Buddha and deny that he taught a path to Buddhahood as well as a path to personal awakening.

95 There are now many published explanations of the different Indian Buddhist views about what saṃsāra and its sufferings are, how persons can achieve freedom from suffering and/or Buddhahood, what exactly a Buddha is, and how a Buddha manifests itself in the different realms of saṃsāra. See the Bibliography for a selection of such books.

96 Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā* was edited by Levi 1925, who emended it in 1932. The Tibetan text was first edited in La Vallée Poussin in 1912, and a bilingual Sanskrit–Tibetan text is included in N. Aiyaswami Sastri's *Viṃśatikā* (Gangtok: Namgyal Institue, 1964).

97 In both of these Mahāyāna schools it was claimed that some teachings of the Buddha require interpretation, since he taught them, out of skill in means, for those who were not adequately prepared to hear his definitive teachings, with the understanding that when they were prepared to hear them, the provisional teachings they received could be replaced by those which represent what he took to be the truth. Accordingly, the sūtras that require interpretation are to be distinguished from those that are definitive. Compare *IBTP*, pp. 82–5 and 193–6.

98 See note 14.

99 Hereafter, I refer to the chapters of the *Treatise* by placing its number after "*Treatise*," and to one or more verses of the chapter by placing, after a period, the number or numbers of the verses contained in the chapter.

100 There are numerous translations of this work. See the Bibliography.

101 There is an English translation of this work that is based on its Chinese translation. The translation is by G. Tucci in *Pre-Diṇnāga Buddhist Texts on Logic from Chinese Sources*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1929). There is also an English translation, from the Sanskrit, composed by Kamaleswar Bhattacharya in *The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978). The book contains the Sanskrit critically edited by E.H. Johnson and Arnold Kunst.

102 The Naiyāyika logicians are those who composed works on the logic and epistemology of the Nyāya School of Indian philosophy. The works of the Naiyāyika logicians are closely associated with the metaphysical śāstras of the Vaiśesika school. However, included among the Nyāya śāstras are works of metaphysics.

103 This work is translated into English from the Tibetan translation. The translator is C. Lindtner in *Nagarjuniana*, Indiske Studier 4 (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982), pp. 34–69. It contains the edited Tibetan text. A translation by David Ross Komito has been published, entitled *Nāgārjuna's "Seventy Stanzas": A Buddhist Psychology of Emptiness* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1987), which adds a commentary composed with the help of Geshe Sonam Rinchen.

104 Lindtner translates this work in *Nagarjuniana*, pp. 100–19.

105 The Tibetan translations of these works do not yet seem to have been translated into English.

106 Only a Tibetan translation of this commentary fully survives. Translations of some of its chapters are listed in the Bibliography.

107 There is an English translation, from the Tibetan, of Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*, along with a translation of the commentary by Gyel-tsp, made by Ruth Sonam, in *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas: Gyel-tsp on Āryadeva's Four Hundred* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1994). This book also includes her translation of an oral commentary by Geshe Sonam Rinchen. Candrakīrti's commentary on the first four chapters is translated, from the Tibetan, by Karen Lang, in *Four Illusions: Candrakīrti's Advice to Travelers on the Bodhisattva Path* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). There is an English translation of chapters 12 and 13 of Candrakīrti's commentary on *Catuḥśataka* composed by C. Lindtner, from the Tibetan, and by Tom Tillemans in *Materials for the Study of Āryadeva, Dharmapāla and Candrakīrti*, in the series, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 24, 2 vols. (Vienna: Arbeitskries Für Tibetische Und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1990).

108 There is a translation of the first chapter of Buddhapālita's commentary by Judit Fehér, in Louis Ligeti (ed.), *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Körosem*, vol. I (Budapest: Akademiae Kiado, 1984), pp. 211–40, and chapter 18 is translated by C. Lindtner in *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 23 (1981), 187–217.

109 See the next note.

110 There is an English translation of the first 136 verses of chapter 3 of the *Madhyamakahrdāyakārikā*, with their *Tarkajvālā* commentary, in S. Iida's *Reason and Emptiness: A Study in Logic and Mysticism* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1980). A partial translation (chapters 18, 24, and 25) was made by David Eckel in "A Question of Nihilism: Bhāvaviveka's Response to the Fundamental Problems of Mādhyamika Philosophy," an unpublished dissertation at Harvard University in 1980.

111 A discussion of this question may be found in *The Svātantrika–Prāsaṅgika Distinction: What Difference Does a Difference Make?* ed. by Georges B.J. Dreyfus and Sara L. McClintock (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2003).

112 The twelve links are ignorance (*avidyā*), karmic accumulation (*saṃskāra*), consciousness (*vijñāna*), name and form (*nāmarūpa*), the six bases of perception (*saḍāyatanāni*), contact (*sparśa*), feelings (*vedanā*), craving (*tṛṣṇā*), clinging (*upādāna*), coming to be by reason of action (*karmabhava*), birth (*jāti*), and old age and death (*jarāmarana*). See *Mahānidāna Sūtra* for the most extensive treatment of the twelve links.

113 The learned forms of the transient collection views are set out by Candrakīrti in 144, after they are rejected earlier in the Commentary.

114 What I say here is based on Tsongkhapa's explanation, which is rejected by Tibetan scholars in the other three Tibetan philosophical schools. See, for instance, Wangchuk Dorje's commentary, pp. 386–48 and Mipham's commentary, pp. 294–5.
115 The Emanation Body of a Buddha is a spontaneous manifestation of a mentally constructed Buddha that occurs where there are sentient beings who have acquired the merit to have it appear and so can receive great benefit from the manifestation.
116 The thirty-seven realizations include the four close placements of mindfulness, the four correct abandoners, the four legs of miracle powers, the five powers, the five forces, the seven branches of eṃnlightenment, and the eight branches of superior paths. See *The Thirty-Seven Practices of Bodhisattvas*, by Geshe Sonam Rinchen, trans. and ed. by Ruth Sonam (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1997) for an explanation of the thirty-seven realizations.
117 "The way things are" is a translation of *de nyid* (*tattva*).
118 "Foundation consciousness" is a translation of *kun gzhi rnam shes* (*ālayavijñāna*).
119 "Dependently arising phenomena" is a translation of *gzhan bdang* (*paratantra*).
120 In this summary I will not distinguish the two forms of the thesis that aggregates or minds are a self, though I will distinguish them in my commentary on the Commentary.
121 This is most likely a reference to the Vasubandhu who composed Cittamātra śāstras.
122 Literally, *mi bden rang bzhin* means "an unreal svabhāva" but in this case I think it is clearer to render *mi bden* as "false."
123 Candrakīrti says this in his commentary on verse 25 of the *Sixty Verses on Reasoning*.
124 If heat is said to belong to something other than fire, according to this theory, it must be because fire is present in it. The fire present in things said to be hot, in this case, is the element called fire, not what by convention is called fire because the fire element is its predominant element.
125 There are a variety of Tibetan and Western scholarly interpretations of Candrakīrti's account of svabhāva in his *Clear Words* commentary on *Treatise* 15. The interpretation given above is similar to that of Tsongkhapa, whose interpretation is explained by William Magee in *The Nature of Things: Emptiness and Essence in the Gelug World* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1999). This book contains a translation, from Tibetan, of commentaries on *Treatise* 15 composed both by Candrakīrti and by Tsongkhapa.
126 See his *Appearance & Reality: The Two Truths in the Four Buddhist Tenet Systems* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1999), pp. 75–93.
127 Sonam Thakchoe, *The Two Truths Debate*, *Tsongkhapa and Gorampa on the Middle Way* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2007).
128 The text refers to what obstructs suchness, which is the true intrinsic nature.
129 This is a common name of the Buddha. It means "the Able One."
130 In 159 and in his comment on the verse Candrakīrti calls it a false intrinsic nature.
131 The word for "things" is *dngos* (*bhāva*). Here it means phenomena that perform a function.
132 "Nature" is a translation of *ngo bo*.
133 "The way things are" is a translation of *de nyid*, which is an abbreviated form of *de kho na nyid* (*tattva*).
134 This is a reference to the Cārvakas, who are materialists.
135 The Tibetan translation of this passage does not contain a translation of the Sanskrit I translated as "this is the perverse view that a self does not exist" (*ātmābhāviparyāsa*).
136 "An element of reality that exists" is a translation of *sadbhūta*. Here I follow Vaidya's text rather than manuscript P, which is translated by Sprung.

137 "Awakened Bhagavāns" is a reference to the Buddhas.
138 The text has *satkāyadarśana*, which is surely a reference to *satkāyadṛṣṭi*.
139 "A view of a self" is a translation of *ātmadarśana*.
140 "True nature of phenomena" is a translation of *dharmatā*. The reference is to emptiness.
141 "Perception" is a translation of *upalambha*.
142 The Āryas are those who are exalted because they have realized emptiness.
143 To add to the confusion, *lta ba* is also used as a translation of *darśana*, which does not have exactly the same meaning as *dṛṣṭi*.
144 The term "theory" is better used to translate *vāda*, as it occurs in *ātmavāda*, for instance, which means "the theory of a self."
145 Candrakīrti here, of course, is following the lead of Nāgārjuna, who makes this claim in verse 29 of the *Refutation of Objections*.
146 All Indian Buddhist philosophers assume that the Buddha did not unqualifiedly deny the existence of a self, since doing so, he thought, undermines the accounts of the problem of suffering in saṃsāra and its solution.
147 On the non-otherness thesis, also see Vasubandhu's "Refutation" (*IBTP*, pp. 71–2, 96–110 and my commentaries on them), Candrakīrti's Commentary (Verses 121–5 and his commentaries on them), and the accounts and refutations of the theories of persons of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas and the Sāṃkhyas in Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṃgraha* and Kamalaśīla's *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*. (See Jna's translation, pp. 139–63, 155, 192–203.)
148 See *IBTP*, pp. 24–31.
149 Vasubandhu thinks that a self without person-properties is a collection of aggregates in a causal continuum, since he believes that this collection is the object to which the conception of a person-property self actually refers. The Pudgalavādins think that a self without person-properties is an object to which the conception of a person-property self refers.
150 See *IBTP*, p. 71. Vasubandhu does not explicitly say that the sameness thesis serves the function of explaining the Buddha's denial of unqualified non-existence of a self, but it is clear that this is its primary function.
151 See *IBTP*, p. 45.
152 See the translation of the "Refutation" in *IBTP*, pp. 77–80.

2 TRANSLATION

1 In the Madhyamaka tradition, the transient collection view is said to be a subtle habit of our minds misconceiving ourselves (as objects of the first-person singular pronoun) and things possessed by us.
2 In this verse, and elsewhere in Candrakīrti's Commentary, if the Sanskrit text is available, the Sanskrit is translated rather than the Tibetan translation.
3 Literally, the Tibetan means "causally conditioning phenomena," but in this case, I believe, *'du byed* (*saṃskāra*) is used to refer to the aggregates.
4 "The conception of a self" is a translation of *ngar 'dzin* (*ahaṃkāra*). The conception of a self is the conception of a self as a self that exists. It is the conception of a self as existing, since conceiving a self causes it to appear to exist.
5 This is the object of the first-person singular pronoun.
6 To abandon the transient collection view is to eliminate the conception of a self in the sense of eliminating the grasping at a self because of its appearance of existing, not to eliminate the use of the conception of a self. When the conception of a self is abandoned, the conception of things possessed by a self is abandoned.
7 This is the refutation of the existence of the referent object of the conception of a self.

8 Candrakīrti is asking what the actual object is of the conception of a self. He goes on to consider what the Tīrthikas believe to be its actual object and what the Sāṃmitīyas believe to be its actual object.
9 In the *Clear Words* commentary on *Treatise* 18.1, Candrakīrti paraphrases what is said here. There he uses *ahaṃkāra* ("the conception of a self") instead of *satkāyadṛṣṭi*, which is the Sanskrit equivalent of the Tibetan expression used here.
10 In the text, the verses are not numbered or labeled as "verse."
11 The Sanskrit text of which this Tibetan verse is a translation is found in the *Clear Words* commentary Candrakīrti uses to connect *Treatise* 18.1 to *Treatise* 18.2.
12 *rtsa ba'i rang bzhin* (*mūlaprakṛtir*).
13 The "great one" is a translation of *chen po* (*mahat*). This is also called "the intellect."
14 "Self" here is a translation of *skyes bu* (*puruṣa*).
15 See the introduction for an explanation of this translation of *ngar gyal* (*ahaṃkāra*).
16 Literally, it is said "which are sound, and so forth."
17 "The word '*ni*' ['*tu*' in Sanskrit] has the meaning of making it definite that they are only things that are produced."
18 Literally, the Tibetan means "the ear, and so forth."
19 "Mental organ" is a translation of y*id* (*manas*).
20 Literally, the Tibetan means "sound, and so forth."
21 The meaning of this sentence is somewhat cryptic. Here the interpretation of Engle rather than that of Churinoff is followed.
22 The svabhāva of a self, in this case, is its conventional nature.
23 The meaning of this analogy is that a wife is embarrassed when her unveiled face is seen by a man other than her husband.
24 Churinoff translates this clause as "a self is lazy about activity." Rendawa's translators have him say that "a self is unconcerned with actions."
25 These are, respectively, *rajas* (*rtul*), *tamas* (*mun pa*), and *sattva* (*snying stobs*), which are inseparable from the foundational nature and one another.
26 What pervades everything in space cannot move through space.
27 The order in which these terms occur has been changed in order to make it clear with which of the former three terms they are correlated.
28 "Ultimate foundation" is a translation of *gsto bo* (*pradhāna*).
29 These are, respectively, *rnam par 'gyuṛ ba* (*rājasa*), *snying stobs chon* (*sāttvika*), and *mun ba* (*tāmasa*).
30 The work Candrakīrti here assigns to the ego in which motion is dominant is sometimes attributed in the Sāṃkhya system of thought to the ego in which darkness is dominant. Mipham follows Candrakīrti's interpretation.
31 To possess the nature of the both kinds of organs is to be an organ of both motion and perception.
32 The work Candrakīrti here assigns to the ego in which darkness is dominant is sometimes attributed in the Sāṃkhya system of thought to the ego in which passion is dominant. Rendawa and Mipham follow Candrakīrti's interpretation.
33 Definite goodness is total freedom from suffering and from rebirth.
34 Literally, the Tibetan means "properties of cognition, and so forth" (*blo la sogs pa 'yon tan*).
35 These would seem to be the Advaita Vedāntins.
36 The support (*rten*) of the conception of a self is the mentally constructed object of the first-person singular pronoun. It is the same as its actual object, which exists in dependence upon the aggregates. It is opposed to its conceived object, which is a self that exists by itself.
37 For another statement of the points made in this verse, see Candrakīrti's comments in *Clear Words*, which are quoted in the commentary.

38 The object of the conception of a self to which Candrakīrti refers here is the same as its support (*rten*), which is mentioned in 122c. The object of the conception of a self is just the object of the first-person singular pronoun.

39 An object seen from an ultimate point of view is what is seen as a result of an analysis of the object that reveals whether or not it is the same as the causal basis of its conception. An object seen from a conventional point of view is an object seen as it is by convention seen, which is apart from being analyzed to determine whether or not it is the same as the causal basis of its conception. In his commentary on 122c, Candrakīrti is implying that a self other than the aggregates is not, when seen from an ultimate point of view, the support of the conception of a self.

40 This may be a reference to the ultimate intrinsic nature of a self, whatever it may be.

41 This and all other quotations from the *Treatise* I have translated from the Sanskrit text of *Clear Words* rather than from their Tibetan translations.

42 "Of a self and of things possessed by a self" is a translation of *bdag dang bdag gi* (*ātmātmīya*).

43 The Tibetan for what I have translated as "does not exist" is often translated as "is not established," which in English means that something has gone through the process of being established not to exist. Because I am not convinced that the corresponding Sanskrit term has this meaning, here and elsewhere I simply translate this expression as "does not exist."

44 "The object of the mistaken view of a self" is a translation of *bdag lta'i dmigs pa*. In this case, the object is the object of the conception of a self, not the conceived object.

45 The conclusion that follows from the argument of the Sāṃmitīyas, strictly speaking, is that "a self the same as the aggregates exists." This is the thesis Candrakīrti believes that they assert.

46 The support of the mistaken view of a self is the same as the support of the conception of a self. It is the appearing object of the transient collection view, as opposed to its referent object.

47 *Śramaṇas* are those who drop out of conventional society and wander about, begging for sustenance, so they may devote all of their time to the pursuit of a path to awakening.

48 The source of his quotation may be the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* III.46.

49 The *Sūtra Piṭaka* (Sūtra Basket) is made up of five *Āgama*-s (scriptures) or *Nikāya*-s (collections), one of which is called the *Kṣudraka Āgama*-s (Minor Scriptures), and among these is the *Udānavarga*, which is the Sanskrit version of the Pali *Dhammapāda*, but it has over twice as many verses. In *Indian Buddhism*, 3rd rev. edn. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2000), p. 326, A.K. Warder says that Dharmatrāta rearranged and perhaps enlarged the existing *Dharmapāda* in the *Kṣudraka Āgama* and produced a text called the *Udānavarga* of which Dharmatrāta is sometimes supposed to be the actual author.

50 "Substance" is a translation of *rdzas* (*dravya*).

51 This verse and verse 128 are quoted, in the original Sanskrit, in Candrakīrti's *Clear Words* commentary on *Treatise* 18.1.

52 The other forms of consciousness are the ear-consciousness, the tongue-consciousness, the skin-consciousness, and the mind-consciousness. The six consciousnesses are named after the organs of perception in dependence upon which they arise.

53 "Substantially real" is a translation of *rdzas su yod* (*dravyasat*).

54 Literally, the Tibetan means "blue, yellow, and so forth" (*sdon pa dang ser pa la sogs pa*).

55 The svabhāva of the aggregates, in this case, is the conventional nature of the aggregates.

56 The nirvāṇa to which reference is made here is obtained, according to the opponent, when an Ārhat (One who has destroyed all of his mental afflictions) dies, and when the Ārhat dies, according to the opponent, the continuum of his or her aggregates passes away.
57 Here svabhāva is the conventional nature of the aggregates and a self is a self without person-properties.
58 Literally, "If there is no error when there is a continuum in suchness" (*de nyed du rgyud yod skyon na skyon me na*).
59 Only the first line of the original the verse is quoted by Candrakīrti.
60 My translation has been expanded to list all four questions.
61 The quotation, which is repetitive, has been abbreviated.
62 A Buddha is often called a Tathāgata, which means "One Thus Gone" in the sense of one who has passed on to the awakened state.
63 This translation is based on La Vallée Poussin's corrections to p. 252, line 10.
64 The others seem to be the Vaiśeṣikas, who claim that a permanent self is an inner agent.
65 Literally, one just sees "causally conditioned phenomena," which just are the aggregates.
66 This translation includes the four lines that were inadvertently omitted on p. 252 of La Vallée Poussin's edition of the text. The lines are restored on p. 420 of his book.
67 Since Candrakīrti uses "attachment, and so forth" to refer to the mental afflictions, this phrase is translated as "the mental afflictions."
68 Candrakīrti believes that the mental afflictions cannot be abandoned unless it is realized that the true intrinsic nature of the aggregates is their emptiness.
69 Literally, the Tibetan means "bodily form, and so forth."
70 This is a reference to their true intrinsic nature.
71 Literally, the Tibetan means "bodily form, and so forth."
72 Literally, the Tibetan means "desire, and so forth."
73 Ditto.
74 Literally, the Tibetan means "bodily form, and so forth."
75 Literally, the Tibetan means "desire, and so forth."
76 Ditto.
77 Here the entire passage is translated, only a part of which Candrakīrti quotes, in order to call attention to the fact that he is repudiating the use of this passage to support the view that the aggregates are a self.
78 I have substituted "the aggregates" for "bodily form, etc."
79 What is rejected is not that a self, by convention and apart from analysis, is a possessor of aggregates, only that a self that exists is a possessor of aggregates.
80 It cannot be perceived among the phenomena in dependence upon which it is conceived. The phenomena in dependence upon which an acquirer is conceived are things acquired.
81 Here I have reversed the order of the two preceding sentences, since it provides a clearer meaning to what Candrakīrti says. Moreover, this seems to be the order in which Tsongkhapa read the sentences, since his commentary shows that he read the first sentence as a conclusion drawn from the second. Finally, either because he used a different text, or he too reversed the order of these two sentences, Curinoff translates "It is appropriate to separate from attachment also to form and so forth, saying 'since when the appropriator is not observed, also its appropriation does not exist.'" Rendawa, Mikyö Dorje, and Mipham do not attempt to paraphrase Candrakīrti's allusion to the sūtra in which the realization of the way things are is discussed.
82 The scripture in question is that in which it is said that the conception of a self pertains only to the five acquired aggregates.
83 When Candrakīrti says "the tree themselves" he means "each of the trees."

84 In this case the svabhāva is a conventional nature.
85 When Candrakīrti glosses his statement that a collection of aggregates does not exist as the statement that it is not substantially real, he means that a collection of aggregates does not exist by itself.
86 Here *bras ba* (*phala*) is translated as "properties," which literally means "results." The idea seems to be that the results produced by the possessor of the collection being not other than the collection possessed are the properties said to belong to the collection.
87 The fault, as explained in 134, is that a collection of aggregates is not substantially real, and so cannot be the same as a self.
88 The first two lines of this first verse are variously translated. According to the Pali version, which is in the *Saṃyuttanikāya*, a nun called Vajira was asked by Māra, a demon, questions about herself in order to confuse her and cause her to abandon the path. In the Pali version, the first line is Vajira questioning Māra about whether there is a self, and the second line is addressed to Māra. The translations of Engle and Tillmann and Tsering (Rendawa commentary) translate the first two lines as addressed to someone, presumably Mara. However, the Tibetan does not support this interpretation. The translations of Curinoff, Nicell (Tsongkhapa commentary), Goldman, Levinson, and the Scotts (Mikyö Dorje commentary), and Padmakara Translation Group (Mipham commentary) translate the first line as I have, as addressed to Māra, a demon mind, that conceives a self, and the second line stating that this mind is a mistaken view. The general idea of the first verse is that conceiving a self is like a demon, since it deceives us, leading us to adopt the mistaken view that a self exists.
89 The idea seems to be that since the mistaken view of a self is included in the fourth aggregate, the aggregate of all the causally conditioning forces present in the aggregates, and this aggregate is empty, the mistaken view of a self is empty.
90 Here "chariots are apprehended by means of discourse" is a translation of *shing rtar brdzod*, and in the next line "sentient beings are apprehended by means of discourse" is a translation of *sems chen* (*brdzod*).
91 A literal translation of what I have translated as "a self exists in dependence upon the aggregates" is "a self depends upon the aggregates," which in English, I believe, means that it exists in dependence upon the aggregates.
92 Here *'dus* is translated as "collection," rather than as "assembled," since in Candrakīrti's commentary on the verse *tshogs* is used to paraphrase it.
93 Here *sdorn po la sogs pa*, which means "blue, and so forth," is translated as "sense-objects."
94 Here *mig la sogs pa*, which means "the eye, and so forth," is translated as "sense-organs."
95 Here Candrakīrti identifies the svabhāva of a self here as with its conventional nature.
96 Here the reference to pots and other such things is to conventionally real objects, since these are in fact the sorts of things to which Candrakīrti is referring.
97 Here *gshugs la sogs pa*, which means "visible forms, and so forth." is translated as "elements," since the sensible forms of things like a pot are considered their elements.
98 The controversies about whether things other than a self are the same as their elements and about whether a self is the same as the collection of its aggregates are similar, as is the inquiry that settles the controversy.
99 Throughout this discussion *'phang lo la sogs*, which means "wheels, and so forth" is translated as "parts."
100 "If it is said to be a configuration, then because a configuration is possessed by bodily forms" is 136a.

101 "One thing" is a translation of *gchig dngos*.
102 An agent of action (*byed po*, *kartṛ*) is related to an object of action (*las*, *karma*) by its action (*las*, *karma*) in the way the subject of an active transitive verb is related to the object of the verb by the verb. Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti sometimes use *karma* to mean "action" and sometimes as "object of action." In this passage it means "object of action."
103 These are the five relations that Candrakīrti enumerates here in the Commentary.
104 This verse is translated from the Sanskrit.
105 Here and elsewhere in the Commentary *mi rigs pa* is translated as "there can be no argument for" or as "it cannot be argued that," which is its sense, rather that the more common translations, as "it is illogical" or "it is not reasonable that."
106 This translation, as the Tibetan translation does, adapts what is said to fit with the language into which it is translated. A more literal translation of the above passage is given by Artemus Engle, in his PhD dissertation, as follows:

> Applying the *lyut* suffix in the sense of an action (*bhāva*), the expression *acquisition* (*upādāna*) means the action of acquiring. And since an action cannot come to be without something producing it, both the object acquired (*upādeya*) and the acquiring agent (*upādātṛ*) are established. The term acquisition can also be taken as an application of the *lyut* suffix in the sense of the object of an action, from the aphorism that "the *kṛtya* and *lyut* suffixes are applied variously" (Paṇiṇi III, 3, 113), in which case it means "that which is acquired."

In the translation the sentence in which reference is made to the aphorism of Paṇiṇi is also omitted.
107 This quotation has been translated from the Sanskrit.
108 This svabhāva is an agent's true intrinsic nature.
109 In this case *las* is surely used to refer to the objects of action rather than to action.
110 The dependently conceived thing to which Candrakīrti refers here is the agent of action, since he then says that the Buddha endorses its existence when he said that a person performs meritorious actions.
111 This is the Sanskrit equivalent of *thub pa*, which is a common epithet of the Buddha. It means "Able One."
112 "The organs of perception" is a translation of *mig sogs pa*, which means "the eye, and so forth." This translation will be used throughout this discussion.
113 The Sanskrit title would be *Pitiputrasamigamasūtra*.
114 Since the quotation is incomplete I have supplied a verb that fits Candrakīrti's interpretation of its meaning.
115 Literally, the meaning is "the eye, and so forth, up to and including the mental organ."
116 The bracketed addition to the translation is included in order to explain how the previous sentence is related to the Sāṃmitīyas' response in 140a.
117 In Tsongkhapa's commentary, *phabs pa*, which occurs in La Vallée Poussin's text, is read as *bag phebs pa*.
118 Literally, the Tibetan means "he will be grabbed by the snake" (*sbrul gyis 'zshin*).
119 Here *pa* is read after *'khor ba*, as in the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies edition, p. 247.
120 The svabhāva of the aggregates here is their conventional nature.
121 Verses 142 and 143 are quoted in Candrakīrti's *Clear Words* commentary on *Treatise* 10.1. See pp. 189–91 of my commentary on the translation for the context of the quotes.
122 The verse does not present the twenty forms of the transient collection view, but the conclusions of analysis that refutes them. Here *bdag tu lta ba* is translated

"the mistaken view of a self." Engle translates this as "ego-conception" and Curinoff as "viewing a self." The last two lines printed here are the last line of the four-line verse.

123 Here *bdag dang bral ba* is translated as "selfless" rather than as it would normally be translated, which is as "separate from a self," since it improves the readability of the translation in English.

124 Here 145a has been translated in two lines because of space constraints.

125 In this case, the technical term, *'phags pa* (*ārya*), is not transliterated, as the technical names of other practitioners are, since "āryan" has a negative connotation since its use in Nazi Germany. An advanced practitioner is one who has directly perceived emptiness on the path of insight.

126 "Substantially real" is a translation of *rdzas su yod pa* (*dravyasat*).

127 "Inexplicable" is a translation of *brdzod med* (*avaktavya*).

128 The svabhāva of the aggregates here is their conventional nature.

129 To be substantially real in this case is to exist by itself.

130 "Is a thing that exists" is a translation of *dngos yod*.

131 "Real by way of a conception" is a translation of *btags par yod* (*prajñaptisat*).

132 The literal meaning is "configurations, and so forth."

133 The literal meaning is "bodily forms, and so forth."

134 Here *chos* (*dharma*) is translated as "character" according to its context of use.

135 The literal meaning is "bodily forms, and so forth."

136 Here *rnam pa* is translated as "characters" because it is being used as a synonym of *chos*, which in the introduction of the verse is translated as "character."

137 The literal meaning is "bodily forms, and so forth."

138 The svabhāva of the aggregates here is their conventional nature.

139 Here and elsewhere in what follows, "wheels, and so forth" (*'phang lo la sogs pa*) is translated as "the individual parts" when it can be done so without confusion.

140 The literal meaning is "the configuration of the spokes, rim and hub has changed."

141 Here and in what follows, what does not exist at all for the opponents does not exist because it does not possess an intrinsic nature by virtue of which it exists.

142 The meaning is that the opponents claim that a conception has substance as its basis in the sense that it is formed in dependence upon either a substance or a collection of substances.

143 Unreal causes are causes that falsely appear to exist.

144 Here *mi bden rang bzhin chen*, whose literal translation is "possess an unreal svabhāva," is translated as "possess a false svabhāva." A false svabhāva is a false intrinsic nature, which is the false appearance of existing by itself.

145 Ignorance and motivating dispositions are the first two of the twelve links in the chain of dependently arising phenomena the Buddha cited in his explanation of how the sufferings of saṃsāra arise.

146 This comparison is paraphrased rather than translated for the sake of expressing the point of the comparison in clear English.

147 "The thought of a pot" is a translation of *bum blo*, which literally means "pot mind." A pot is the customary example of a conventionally real object.

148 Here and in Candrakīrti's commentary on 156, I translate *gshugs sogs*, which literally means "visible forms, and so forth," as "elemental parts," because the "and so forth" is used to refer to the other elemental parts of conventionally real things. Candrakīrti assumes that his readers know that visible forms, and so forth, are considered by his opponents to be the substantially real elemental parts of conventionally real objects.

149 Here and elsewhere in this portion of the Commentary, *bum pa la sog pa* is translated as "conventionally real objects" rather than as "pots, and so forth." See note 114.

150 It is being assumed here that elemental parts, according to the opponents, exist by their own nature. Candrakīrti believes that since things that exist by their own nature do not come to be, they do not exist.

151 Candrakīrti argued in these verses that if things exist by their own nature, they do not come to be from themselves, from things other than themselves, or from both together, yet things come to be. The point is that if the elemental parts of conventionally real objects exist by their own nature, as the opponents believe, they do not exist.

152 This translation is my attempt to render the meaning of *rdza kyi nye bar len ba chen*, rather than what it literally says, which is "possesses the acquisition of substance." The idea is the same as the idea of *dravyasiddha*, which I translated in *IBTP* as "substantially established."

153 It is assumed here that *bdag nyid* is a synonym of *ngo bo nyid*, which here seems to mean the same as svabhāva. The idea is that a special configuration of the aggregates of a conventionally real thing is not the conventional nature of a conventionally real thing.

154 This translation is based on the assumption that Candrakīrti's argument is that since the aggregates of things like pots do not independently exist, the nature of things like pots cannot be a configuration of their parts. The upshot is that things like pots cannot be apprehended in dependence upon configurations of their aggregates. Other interpretations are possible.

155 The meaning is that the opponents believe that the conventional existence of an object of a conception is to be explained by an analysis that shows that the conception refers to something that exists by itself as other than what it is conceived to be.

156 The meaning is that the opponents have no way to explain the conventional existence of a chariot other than by an analysis that shows that a chariot independently exists as something other than what it is conceived to be. But the seven-part analysis shows that it does not independently exist. In the next sentence Candrakīrti calls attention to the problem the opponents then face in explaining the convention that a chariot exists.

157 Here *de nyid* is a form of *de kho na nyid*, which can be translated as "reality" or "suchness." The meaning is that when a chariot's reality is seen, its non-existence is seen.

158 Here I render "neither other than its parts, and so on," as "neither other than nor the same as its parts," since Candrakīrti is alluding to the proof that a chariot does not exist.

159 Here I translate "blue, and so forth" (*sngon po la sog pa*) as "the elements of bodies," and "feelings, and so forth" (*tsor ba la sogs pa*) as "the elements of minds" because these seem to be the sorts of things to which Candrakīrti refers.

160 The Tibetan for "just this being the condition [for that]" is *rkyen nyid 'di pa* (*pratyayatamātra*). This is a synonym of *rten 'brel/rten 'byung* (*pratītyasamutpāda*).

161 In English, of course, we do not call a chariot an "agent," but for the sake of consistency of translation, *byed po* is here so translated. Here an agent is that to which a subject of a transitive active verb refers. Since the chariot acquires parts it is an agent.

162 This is a generalization of what is asserted in 126ab. The Sāṃmitīyas, the Vaibhāṣikas, and the original Sautrāntikas believe that possessors of parts do not independently exist, but the collections of their parts do.

163 Compare this statement to 137 and Candrakīrti's commentary on it.

164 "The way things are" is a translation of *de kho na nyid* (*tattva*).

165 This is the ignorance that is the transient collection view. Compare the use, in the commentary on 120, of "afflicted wisdom" to characterize the transient collection view.

166 The reply is to the view that neither a chariot nor its parts exist.
167 Candrakīrti is representing his opponents as protesting that even though the chariot does not exist as a chariot, it does exist as a collection of chariot-parts, since a collection of chariot-parts are perceived when we look for the chariot in meditation. Candrakīrti's rejoinder will be that if there is no chariot, there can be no chariot-parts, and if there are no chariot-parts, there can be no collection of chariot-parts his opponents perceive.
168 This is not a literal translation of *rgyang ring du spangs pa*, which literally means "is abandoned at a distance," but it does express its meaning in this context.
169 The image of the mind rubbing the sticks of analysis together to burn up what it conceives is found in the *Kaśyapaparivartasūtra*, as well as other places in Indian Buddhist texts.
170 This sentence, which repeats part of what is said in the previous sentence, may be an early mistaken insertion into the text.
171 "Not a thing that exists" is a translation of *dngos yod min*.
172 The Tibetan is *'di ni brtan min shing mi brtan nyid min*, which some translate as "not stable or unstable" and others as "not unchanging and not changing." My rendering is based on my understanding of what the meaning is of four verses from *Treatise* 27 used to support it. Nāgārjuna, I believe, is concerned in these verses with whether a self that exists in the present is or is not the same entity as a self that existed in the past or will exist in the future.
173 In other words, it is neither the same as nor other than its aggregates.
174 This is one of the many expressions used to refer to the Buddha.
175 *Parinirvāṇa* is a nirvāṇa that obtained at the end of the life in which one becomes a Buddha.
176 Only a part of the first line of the verse is cited by Candrakīrti.
177 This reference is to 163a.
178 To possess the nature of a thing (*dngos po*, *bhāva*) is to possess an intrinsic nature.
179 Tsongkhapa in his commentary represents the sūtra passage that follows as used to support the claim that a self does not exist in any way as a thing. The passage shows that sentient beings are said to be inexhaustible because they are not substantially real.
180 This is another expression used to refer to the Buddha.
181 "That they identify something with a self" is translation of *'di ni dag go snyam*, whose literal translation is "thinking 'This is a self.' "
182 In this verse, "confusion" is a translation of *gti mug* (*moha*), which is usually listed as one of the three root mental afflictions, along with desire and anger. In the last line of the verse Candrakīrti says that a self that is an unanalyzed convention "is from confusion" (*gti mug las yin*), which seems to mean "arises from confusion."
183 A false analysis of the svabhāva of a self is a false analysis of its true intrinsic nature.
184 Literally, the Tibetan means "the eye, and so forth."
185 "Ignorance" is a translation of *mi shes pa* (*avidyā*).
186 To possess "a form of its own" (*rang gi ngo bo*, *svarūpa*) is to possess an intrinsic nature.
187 "Confusion" is a translation of *gti mug* (*moha*).
188 Literally, "the eye, and so forth."
189 The svabhāva not perceived is the true svabhāva of a thing.
190 Literally, "bodily forms, and so forth."
191 Literally, "attachment, and so forth."

3 COMMENTARY

1 Even a self, apart from being a possessor of person-properties, can be said to have possessions, since a self is an object of the first-person singular pronoun and we attribute possessions such as clothes, a house, a car, and so on to the object of the first-person singular pronoun.

2 Tsongkhapa thinks that Bhāvaviveka, like Candrakīrti, denies that when a self is analyzed it is shown that the appearing object of the conception of a self exists independently, but unlike Candrakīrti he assumes that it is part of the conventional nature of the appearing object to exist by itself when it appears to a consciousness that by convention is not deceptive. See *Cutting through Appearances*, pp. 279–82, for the standard Gelukpa account.

3 In this case the svabhāva of the aggregates is their conventional nature, since it is when a self without person-properties possesses the defining properties of the aggregates that it is the same as the aggregates.

4 See Mikyö Dorje's commentary, p. 341.

5 There are many translations of this work in print. See the Bibliography.

6 For the different ways in which the Sāṃkhya philosophy has been interpreted, see Part I in Vol. 4 of *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*: *Sāṃkhya, A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), which was written by Gerald Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya.

7 In addition to the above-mentioned book, see also Gerald Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, 2nd rev. edn. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979).

8 "Categories" is a translation of *padārtha*-s.

9 See, for instance, Karl Potter (ed.), *Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology: The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśesika up to Gaṅgeśa* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977).

10 In Mikyö Dorje's commentary on 125 it is said (p. 349) that not only are sentient beings reborn as animals in saṃsāra without conceiving a self that is a permanent separate substance, they also do not conceive "what the great Shar Tsongkhapa claims to be a mentally constructed self that possesses a validly conceived conventional existence as the base of actions and their results." (The translation is mine.) But this comment, of course, does not represent anything that Candrakīrti himself says in the verse or its commentary. But it is a good example of the extremes to which Tsongkhapa's opponents will go to call attention to their opposition to his interpretation of Candrakīrti's theory of persons.

11 The *Tattvasaṃgraha* of Śāntarakṣita with its commentary by Kamalaśīla has been translated by G. Vyas in *The Tattvasaṃgraha of Śāntarakṣita with the Commentary of Kamalaśīla* (Delhi: Matilal Banarsidass, 1986).

12 In Geshe Gyatso's commentary it is claimed (p. 300) that Candrakīrti is attributing to the Sāṃmitīyas the thesis that each of the aggregates is a self. Geshe Gyatso seems to claim this because some of Candrakīrti's objections to their thesis are objections to each of the aggregates being a self. The Sāṃmitīyas, I believe, did not assert such a thesis. As I explain in the Introduction, Candrakīrti objects to this thesis because he assume that they are committed to but do not assert the thesis that each of the aggregates is a self. Like other Buddhists they knew that the Buddha denied that each of the aggregates is a self.

13 In Tsongkhapa's commentary on 126cd he extends the view, that mind is a self, to Bhāvaviveka and others, and quotes Bhāvaviveka's *Tarkajvālā* as containing the view that the conception of a self applies to the mental consciousness. Bhāvaviveka, he thinks, holds this view because of what is stated in this sūtra and other sūtras and because mental consciousness is what acquires a body.

14 Rendawa (p. 256) seems to interpret Candrakīrti's claim, that a self would become a

substance, to be the claim that a self would become substantially established. If this were Candrakīrti's meaning, the consequence would be a consequence Vasubandhu, for instance, would accept, since conventional realities, he believes, are substantially established. See *IBTP*, pp. 29–31, 74, and 123–7.

15 See, for instance, *IBTP*, p. 83, where the context of the passage is also included.

16 According to Candrakīrti, parinirvāṇa is the nirvāṇa of a Buddha after he dies, but according to some schools, including the Sāṃmitīyas, it is the nirvāṇa of an Ārhat after he dies.

17 There are a number of good books now in print in which the Spiritual Bodies of a Buddha are explained. See the Bibliography.

18 This last point is based on teachings I have received from several Tibetan monk scholars.

19 Compare *IBTP*, pp. 3, 93–4, 96–8, 233–5, 238–44.

20 To be other, of course, is to be other.

21 To exist, in this context, is to exist independently.

22 The term I translate here as "aggregates" literally means "phenomena," but I use "aggregates" because it makes it clear to which phenomena Candrakīrti is referring.

23 Only the first line of the original verse is quoted by Candrakīrti. What little commentary he provides on the original verse is not pertinent to the use of the verse here.

24 A development of a continuum is an effect produced in it by its cause.

25 For an example of this interpretation, according to which the questions were not answered because the answers would have been misinterpreted by the person asking the question, see *IBTP*, pp. 89–93, 222–32.

26 Geshe Gyatso says (p. 304) that when the Buddha was asked whether the world of persons had an end, "he did not reply, but his intention was that it did not."

27 In this last set of questions the reference to the Buddha is to the Buddha during his last rebirth, in which he still retains aggregates as a result of contaminated actions performed in past lives.

28 See *Cutting through Appearances*, p. 203, for a fuller explanation.

29 In this case and in the remaining discussion of his reply, not to exist by itself is not to exist at all, since this is what Candrakīrti thinks the Sāṃmitīyas mean when they say that something does not exist.

30 It is not clear whether or not Candrakīrti means to be attributing to the Sāṃmitīyas a reply that would have been made by the Abhidharma schools. In Vasubandhu's "Refutation" it is not said that it is a permanent self whose existence is to be denied in order to enable us to become free from suffering in saṃsāra.

31 The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika conception of a self is described in Candrakīrti's commentary on 121. The notion of an agent here is that of an agent that performs actions and later receives the results of these actions.

32 Several translators of the verse, however, have added "since" or "because" to 134d in order to make the argument of 134cd clear.

33 See pp. 41, 45, 126–7, 136, 141–2, 148, 166, 168–9 in *IBTP* for statements of Vasubandhu's use of the principle.

34 "If it is said to be a configuration, then because a configuration is possessed by bodily forms" is 136a.

35 In this case a svabhāva is the true intrinsic nature of a thing.

36 A more literal translation of this sentence is:

> Although no cloth, which is other than a pot, is seen that does not exist apart from that [pot], it is not correct to say, in the same way, that no fire is seen that does not exist apart from fuel.

37 The five theses, of course, are that a self and the aggregates are not the same, a self and the aggregates are not other, a self is not present in the aggregates, a self is not that in which the aggregates are present, and a self does not possess the aggregates.
38 "With reference to every self" (*iti anena sarvātmanā*) has been omitted.
39 The meaning is that a self and its aggregates would be apprehended as other than one another.
40 These are the remainder of the first theses refuted in *Treatise* 10 when "fire" is substituted for "a self" and "fuel" is substituted for "the aggregates" in them.
41 See *IBTP*, pp. 72, 142–50.
42 Here and in the remainder of this quotation "svabhāva" is used to refer to an intrinsic nature by virtue of whose possession something exists by itself.
43 Not to possess the form of what it acquires seems to be to not possess its defining properties.
44 Candrakīrti is explaining 27.8b before he explains 27.8a. In this case a self would be coming to be and passing away as a different self, which is by convention false.
45 Here I translate as "is explained" what should more literally be translated as is "to be learned."
46 See *IBTP*, p. 88. Although the quotations come from the same sūtra, the quotations are not exactly the same. Candrakīrti and Vasubandhu may be quoting from different versions of the same sūtra. Vasubandhu assumes that since only the aggregates exist by themselves, they are the objects of action, and that the aggregates arise as the results of actions contaminated by the mistaken view of a self.
47 In most Indian Buddhist philosophical schools space is said to be a permanent phenomenon, and as such, cannot be part of the causal basis of the conception of a self. Candrakīrti may be including the element, space, as one of the causal bases of the conception of a self because, in the Mādhyamika School, it is not considered a permanent phenomenon.
48 This Joan Nicell's translation in her unpublished manuscript, p. 145.
49 *nāsti svabhāvataḥ* (*rang bshin gyis med pa*).
50 Word construction, of course, is the verbal counterpart of conceptual construction.
51 Candrakīrti quotes this verse in C163. In the Tibetan translation of *Treatise* 10.1a, "fuel" is made the subject, and so it reads, "If fuel were fire, . . ."
52 He also quotes this verse in C163. In the Tibetan translation of *Treatise* 18.1a "the aggregates" is made the subject, and so it reads, "If the aggregates were a self, . . ." This is an unacceptable consequence because the aggregates are conceived to be substantially real.
53 This is also cited in Candrakīrti's commentary on 163.
54 In the text as it is represented both by La Vallée Poussin and Vaidya, *Treatise* 10.3ab is coupled with *Treatise* 10.2cd rather than with *Treatise* 10.3cd.
55 This verse and the two others that follow seem to have been composed by Candrakīrti himself by changing the subjects of the verses in *Treatise* 10, which he has quoted so that they apply to the Buddha's acquiring the aggregates instead of fire burning fuel. In each case, an agent and object of action are involved.
56 A literal translation is "there is no continuum of things coming to be and no continuum of substances."
57 The line, "with respect to such things as sameness and otherness, permanence, and impermanence," is 146b.
58 See the translation of the "Refutation," in *IBTP*, pp. 73–4, and my commentary, pp. 131–50.
59 See *IBTP*, pp. 77–82, 170–93.
60 See *IBTP*, pp. 8–14.
61 See the translation of the "Refutation" in *IBTP*, p. 74, and my commentary, pp. 141–50. See also the introduction of *IBTP*, pp. 8–14, 20–2.

62 In *Treatise* 24.18 Nāgārjuna says the middle way between the extremes of independent existence and no existence at all is dependent existence, which includes both the emptiness of existence without dependence upon something else and dependently conceived existence.
63 In his commentary on 152, Tsongkhapa presents and answers a different reply to Candrakīrti's objection. The reply is that since even though a chariot does not exist by itself, the collection of the parts of a chariot exists by itself and is the possessor of the parts of a chariot, and since a possessor of the parts of a chariot exists by itself, it can be said that a configuration of the parts of a chariot exists by itself. Tsongkhapa's objection to the reply is that it still follows that the denial of the independent existence of a chariot implies that a configuration of the parts of a chariot cannot be a chariot, since a collection of chariot-parts is itself a part of a chariot, not a possessor of the parts of a chariot. He adds that the independent existence of any other possessor of chariot-parts is not asserted. However, neither the reply Tsongkhapa considers nor his objection to the reply is very convincing. The reply does nothing to side-step the objection it is used to side-step, which is that the configuration of the parts of a chariot presupposes the independent existence of a chariot whose independent existence is denied, and Tsongkhapa's objection falsely assumes that a part of a chariot cannot possess the parts of a chariot. The parts of a wheel of a chariot, which is a part of a chariot, for instance, are also chariot-parts.
64 Tsongkhapa would say that what Candrakīrti claims here is that the existence of a dependently conceived self is not being rejected. This should not be understood, however, to mean that the independent existence of a dependently conceived self is not being rejected; what is not being rejected, according to Tsongkhapa, is the dependent existence of a self. Mikyö Dorje, Mipham, and others seem to think that talk of the existence of a dependently conceived self implies that a dependently conceived self independently exists. Tsongkhapa speaks of the existence of a dependently conceived self in order to help us avoid the nihilistic extreme that a self does not exist at all.
65 The previous verse enumerates only mistaken views of the posterior limit of the present existence of a self.
66 The Tibetan text has *Treatise* 15.4b say that the acquirer would be different, rather than what our Sanskrit text says, which is that the things acquired would be different. Hence, Tsongkhapa has a different interpretation of the line and Candrakīrti's commentary on it. See *Ocean of Reasoning*, pp. 547–8 for Tsongkhapa's interpretation.
67 A more literal translation is "not non-different."
68 The Sanskrit sentence translated here does not contain a negative particle, but I have added one because the logic of the arguments demands it.
69 In this case "svabhāva" means "conventional nature."
70 It is not being denied that apart from analysis it is true that a Tathāgata is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates. In fact, it is Nāgārjuna's own view that, from this point of view, a Tathāgata is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates.
71 Nāgārjuna previously argued that what comes to be and passes away cannot exist by virtue of possessing an intrinsic nature.
72 Literally, the translation is "sky" rather than "clouds."
73 Those to whom these false realities appear are called "children" because their minds have not "grown up" by passing through the stage of having directly apprehended emptiness.
74 To enter into the way things are is to have a direct apprehension of emptiness.
75 Inner phenomena are self, mental states, and the subtle forms of the sense organs, and outer phenomena are external objects, including the remainder of one's body.
76 Inner and outer things are not perceived yet are conceived, and the way things are includes the absence of conceiving them.

77 The Tibetan translation inserts between this sentence and the next the following two sentences: "The meditator who considers these matters and desires to enter into ultimate reality and abandon all mental afflictions and [the] faults [of saṃsāra], asks what the root of saṃsāra is. Having considered the matter in this way,…"
78 This paragraph was translated in my commentary on 120.
79 See 144–5 and C144–5.
80 In this case not being one thing seems to mean not being the same over time. The Tibetan translation renders this sentence as, "It is not accepted that a self comes to be and passes away because there are a number of [unacceptable] consequences."
81 This verse is quoted here in C163.
82 This verse is quoted here in the commentary on 163 and in C128.
83 Here the defining properties of the aggregates are those they possess by convention, not defining properties they possess by virtue of possessing an intrinsic nature. If the aggregates were to possess an intrinsic nature, they could not come to be, be, or pass away, since what possesses an intrinsic nature possesses both its existence and identity by itself, which means that it cannot be caused to come to be, and so, according to Candrakīrti, be and then pass away. This is the point that Candrakīrti makes in the next few sentences.
84 See 122–5 and their commentaries.
85 Candrakīrti cites the properties of the five aggregates rather than listing their names. Because he says that the property of *rūpa* is *rūpana*, the property of *vedanā* is *anubhava*, the property of *saṃjñā* is *nimittaudgrahaṇa*, the property of *saṃskāra* is *abhisaṃskaraṇa*, and the property of *vijñāna* is *viṣayaprativijbapti* he is obviously conceiving the aggregates as agents that perform these functions.
86 *svarūpata*.
87 See the explanation of *upādāyaprajñapti* in the Introduction.
88 "Something being dependently conceived" is a translation of upādāyaprajñapti.
89 See especially 8.12–3.
90 The translation of this verse is not exact. What is translated is its meaning, which is that a self that does not exist by its own nature is conceived in dependence upon the aggregates in the way that a face in a mirror, which does not exist as a face, is seen in dependence upon the mirror.
91 This last verse does not occur in the Tibetan translation. *Bhikṣus* are monks.
92 *upādāya prajñapyamāna*.
93 "A thing with a svabhāva" is a translation of *bhāvasvabhāvataḥ*.
94 "Freedom" is a translation of *mokṣa*.
95 "Thought" is a translation of *vikalpa*.
96 "The conceptualizing activity of the mind" is a translation of *prapañca*.
97 Although in the text it is said here and in what follows that emptiness prevents the arising of the objects of the mind, the meaning is that the realization of emptiness prevents their arising.
98 In C165 Candrakīrti claims that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas also realize the selflessness of persons.
99 This quotation also occurs in Candrakīrti's commentary on 120.
100 The reference is to *bhava*, which is the tenth link of the chain of dependent-arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Becoming is our coming to be in one of the three realms, those of sense desire, bodily form, and no bodily form.
101 For a recent translation of this chapter, along with a commentary by a Tibetan Buddhist scholar, see Geshe Sonam Rinchen's *How Karma Works: The Twelve Links of Dependent Arising*, trans. by Ruth Sonam (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2006). According to the twelve stages of the dependent arising of saṃsāra, in dependence upon ignorance of the true nature of phenomena, mental actions are performed, in dependence upon mental actions being performed, consciousness of

objects arises, in dependence upon consciousness of objects arising, the aggregates arise, in dependence upon the arising of the aggregates, organs of perception arise, in dependence upon organs of perception arising, contact between organs of perception and objects arise, in dependence upon contact between organs of perception and objects arising, feelings of pleasure, pain, and indifferent feelings arise, in dependence upon these feelings arising, attachment to objects arises, in dependence upon attachment to objects arising, grasping at objects arises, in dependence upon grasping at objects arising, the becoming arises, in dependence upon becoming arising, birth arises, in dependence upon birth arising, aging and death arises.

102 Here "phenomena" is used to translate "bodily form, *et cetera*."

103 A more literal translation of this sentence is that "A world of objects created by the mind is impossible in [the realization of] emptiness once all things are seen to be without a svabhāva."

104 In this paragraph svabhāva is the false intrinsic nature of an object.

105 Here I omit a paragraph in which Candrakīrti explains the uses of "every" in 10.15a and "fully" in 10.15c.

106 "Things other than a self and its acquisitions" is a translation of "pots, *et cetera*."

107 These are the categories that the Vaiśeṣikas use to classify all things that exist. Candrakīrti is saying that the Buddha did not accept their classification of things as a means to understanding conventional reality. His classification is a classification of the different mutual dependency relations that comprise the dependently arising world.

108 I have not been able to locate these verses. I am assuming that the words are represented as spoken by the Buddha in a Mahāyāna scripture.

109 *tattva*.

110 Candrakīrti's point is that since one who sees emptiness does not exist by himself, he cannot be seen when we look for him in the causal basis of his conception.

111 What is internal and what is external was explained in my commentary on 164.

112 Another text has: "Empty phenomena are referred to by means of words, and with words it is said that they are beyond words." The exact meaning of the text we have is not explained. Perhaps the meaning is that because it is being conceived that things are empty, and what is conceived is conceived to exist by its own nature, things as conceived cannot be destroyed. On the other hand, since things that exist by their own natures do not exist at all, the refutation of their existence shows that they are destructible. If it were said that empty phenomena were taught to be neither destructible nor indestructible the interpretation would be easy: because they do not exist independently.

113 The idea of quieting the things that falsely appear to exist is based on the metaphor that they are like loud noises that disturb the mind and that by eliminating them we no longer have to endure the noise.

114 "Conceptualizing activity of the mind" is a translation of *prapañca*.

115 This quotation also occurs in Candrakīrti's commentary on 120.

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